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NOV.

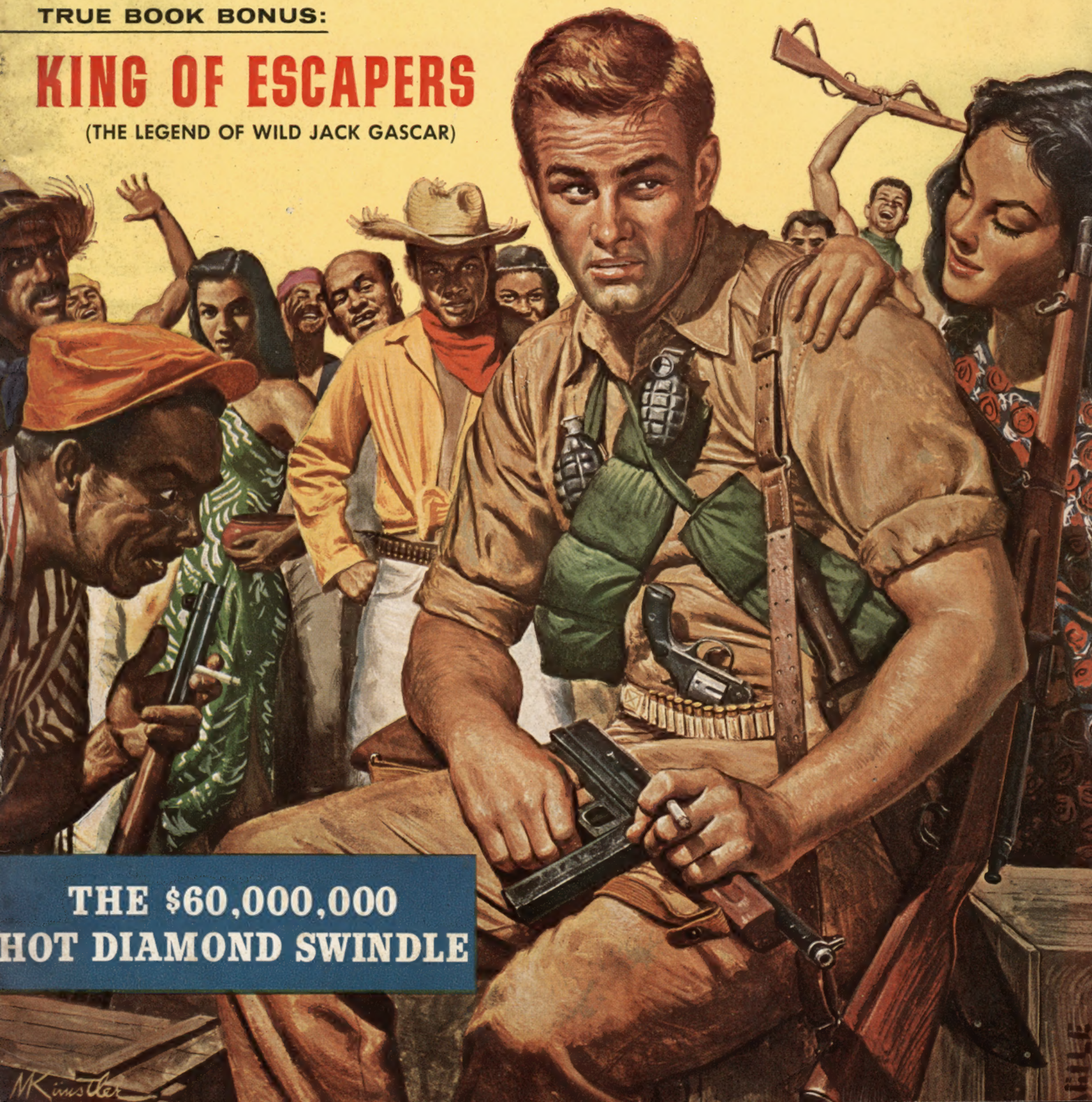
MAROONED IN PARADISE

(14 YEARS ON A LOST ISLAND OF WOMEN)

TRUE BOOK BONUS:

KING OF ESCAPERS

(THE LEGEND OF WILD JACK GASCAR)



THE $60,000,000 HOT DIAMOND SWINDLE

ALBERT DORNE — probably the greatest money-maker in the history of commercial art. At the height of his career, he began a full-time search for people who like to draw.

He's Looking for People Who Like to Draw

by Rex Taylor

TODAY thousands of people who never thought they could be artists are working happily at easels and drawing boards, making pictures — and getting paid for them. And the only one who is not surprised is Albert Dorne — the man most responsible for their success.

Who are some of the people Dorne has helped to succeed?

Don Smith, who lives in New Orleans, La., is a good example. Three years ago Don knew nothing about art — even doubted he had talent. Today he is an illustrator with a large advertising agency.

John Busketta is another. He was a pipefitter's helper with a big gas company. Today he still works for the same company — but now he is an artist in the advertising department with a big increase in pay.

Busy New York mother, Elizabeth Merriss, now adds to her family's income by designing greeting cards and illustrating children's books.

A great-grandmother in Newark, Ohio, decided to use her spare time to study painting. Recently, she had her first local "one man" show — where she sold thirty-two water colors and five oil paintings.

John Whitaker of Memphis was an airline clerk two years ago. Recently he won a prize in a national cartooning contest and was signed to do a newspaper comic strip.

Long before Albert Dorne started on his full-time career of looking for people who like to draw, they came looking for him — seeking the help and guidance of America's highest paid commercial artist.

Since Dorne alone could only help a few of the thousands of men and women who wanted to become artists, he called together a group who with himself comprised America's twelve most successful artists . . . men with nation-wide reputations like Norman Rockwell, Jon Whitcomb, Stevan Dohanos and Al Parker.

A Plan to Help Others

What he told them was simply this, "All over the country there are men and women who like to draw and who could be successful artists. Why can't we give these people the one thing they can't get elsewhere — show them the trade secrets and techniques we ourselves learned only through years of successful experience. I'm suggesting an entirely new kind of school — one that will give talented people everywhere an opportunity to get top-drawer professional art training without leaving their homes or giving up their jobs."

America's 12 Most Famous Artists

NORMAN ROCKWELL	FRED LUDEKENS
JON WHITCOMB	BEN STAHL
AL PARKER	ROBERT FAWCETT
STEVAN DOHANOS	AUSTIN BRIGGS
DONG KINGMAN	HAROLD VON SCHMIDT
PETER HELCK	ALBERT DORNE

The idea met with great enthusiasm. Taking time off from their busy careers, the famous artists made over 5,000 special drawings — covering every aspect of drawing and painting — as part of their revolutionary new way to explain professional art techniques. Instruction started from scratch. So practical and so detailed was this new way to learn art, no previous training or experience in art was necessary.

Next came their most challenging problem . . . how would they correct the drawings students sent in? They tested many approaches. The system they finally selected is the most personal and most effective method of criticism that the field of art has ever known.

The original course in Commercial Art and Illustration was so successful, two other equally outstanding courses have since been added—the Famous Artists Painting Course and the Famous Artists Cartoon Course.

Albert Dorne, President of the School, is not surprised at all by the success of his students. "Opportunities open to trained artists today are enormous. We continually get calls and letters from art buyers all over the U. S. They ask us for practical, well-trained students — not geniuses — who can fill full-time or part-time jobs."

Unique Art Talent Test

Today, instead of interviewing people, Dorne and his fellow artists have created a much more revealing method for discovering and measuring art talent . . . their own 12-page Famous Artists Talent Test. Originally there was a $1 charge for this test. But now the School offers it free and grades it free. Men and women who reveal natural talent through the test are eligible for training by the School.

Find out if your art talent is worth training. Simply return the coupon. The Famous Artists Talent Test will be mailed to you without cost or obligation. This might well be your first step to an exciting new life in the wonderful world of art.

FAMOUS ARTISTS SCHOOLS
Studio 707, Westport, Conn.

Please send me — without obligation — your famous Artists Talent Test.

Mr.
Mrs. ..... Age.....
Miss (PLEASE PRINT)

Address.....

City ..... Zone.....

County ..... State.....

Satisfied with my JOB and PAY?

NOT ME!

TODAY, you are probably earning enough to get by—enough to provide your family with life's necessities, and perhaps you are depositing a few extra dollars in the bank.

BUT are you content with just earning a living wage? Do you say "Someday I'll really get a break and go right on to the top." THAT'S WISHFUL THINKING!

You know that the "breaks" go to the man or woman who is *prepared* to take advantage of them—to the person who can fill the better job and who is worth more money. He makes the "breaks" instead of waiting for them.

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There is a field of business which has never been overcrowded—it's the ACCOUNTING FIELD. And the demand for skilled accountants—men and women who really know their business—is increasing. State and Federal legislation requires much more efficient accounting from business. Corporations are in constant need of expert counsel in matters relating to Auditing, Cost Accounting, Business Law, and Federal Income Tax. Men who prove their qualifications in this important branch of business are promoted to responsible executive positions—given an opportunity to earn real salaries. The range is $5,000 to $10,000 a year—*even to higher income figures.*

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City, Zone & State.....

NOVEMBER, 1958
VOL. 9, NO. 11

stag

Contents

TRUE BOOK BONUS

THE LEGEND OF WILD JACK GASCAR.....Neil Pritchie.....20
For a woman he deserted the army, then led a band of Legion outcasts on an African reign of terror.

TRUE

MAROONED IN PARADISE.....Robert J. Fuller.....12
The maps say there's no such place, yet he insists he lived on a South Sea island of Arabs.

A CIRCLE OF COFFINS FOR COMPANY C.....Edward A. Dieckmann.....16
It was their first battle, and the wagon-box barricade could be their last resting place.

THE $60,000,000 HOT DIAMOND SWINDLE.....Frank Ellis.....18
The all-out land-sea-air assault on the two-sided smuggling along Skeleton Coast.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION.....30

THE DESPERATE CROSSING OF CAPTAIN INCH.....A. A. Hoehling.....32
Out of 657 who sailed aboard the Volturno, 132 got no farther than the mid-Atlantic.

ALBERT ANASTASIA: HATCHET MAN OF THE MOB.....Frank Mullady.....38
He lived by one savage rule: "If you ain't got no witnesses, you ain't got no case."

BOOT HILL FOR NEVADA SAM BROWN.....Russ Leadabrand.....42
Six months of slavery turned him into the West's most ruthless killer.

OFF-TRAIL

SEARCH FOR THE UNKNOWN FRAULEIN.....A STAG Picture Feature.....26

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.....A STAG Cartoon Feature.....36

FICTION

THE FIVE SINGSONG GIRLS OF STOCKADE 9.....Austin Mason.....24
Nothing worked on the holdouts in Hut 13 until Lt. Sung dreamed up a brand-new gimmick.

DEPARTMENTS

STAG CONFIDENTIAL..... 6

LAST LAUGHS..... 8

OUT OF THIS WORLD.....11

OUT OF THE STAG BAG.....84

THE SIGN OF GREAT READING! LOOK FOR THIS DIAMOND ON THE COVERS OF YOUR FAVORITE ADVENTURE MAGAZINES

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What to Do About It is Told in My FREE BOOK!

I'm Charles Atlas. As you can see, I'm in pretty good shape. But you can bet I never stood around like this years ago, when I was one of the most miserable-looking specimens you ever saw. What made the difference? What changed me from a scrawny, 97-pound weakling into the "World's Most Perfectly Developed Man"? A secret that I call Dynamic Tension. And believe me, brother, it works! During the past 30 years, my Dynamic Tension has changed many thousands of weaklings -- fellows who were ashamed of their bodies -- into beautifully proportioned human dynamos of strength, energy, and tireless endurance...with the kind of muscular development that needn't take "back talk" from anybody. I believe I can make a mighty powerful He-Man out of you, too. And in a very short time. In fact, you can prove it to yourself -- without risking a penny. My big free book will tell you how Dynamic Tension works. Where shall I send your copy? There's not a bit of cost or obligation on your part. So why not mail the coupon now?

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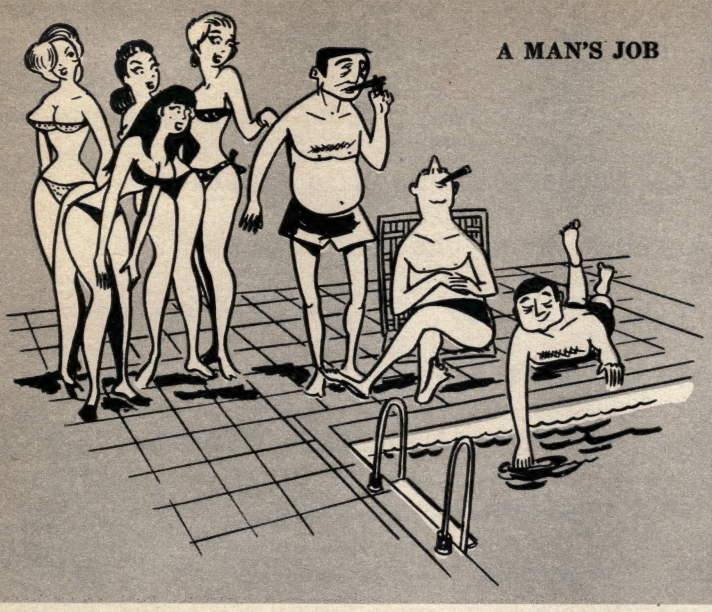
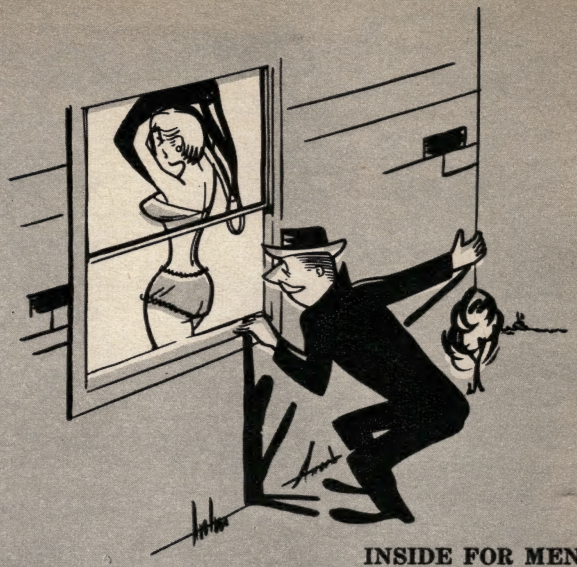
(please print or write plainly)

Address.....

City.....Zone No. (if any).....State.....



A MAN'S JOB



INSIDE FOR MEN

STAG CONFIDENTIAL

A MAN'S JOB

TRICKIEST DUTY ON POLICE FORCE is job of confidential cop. He reports to commissioner, spies on rest of department with Minifones, movie camera and tape recorders. Object: CATCH CROOKED BUDDIES IN ACTS OF DISHONESTY. . . .

Young guys getting hired as "pool gigolos." They have to sit around newly opened pools, attract women into becoming members. . . .

Most big companies now have a captive "headshrinker." You go to him when you've got a problem dogging you, need to get it off your chest . . . Hardware biz still a damned good bet if you feel the urge to sneak into your own business. Very low rate of failure. If your town of 10,000 has two already, it can usually support two more. . . .

YOU'VE GOT A BETTER CHANCE AS A CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENT if you walk in with some specialty. Anything is good experience in the spy racket: butchering, beachcombing, bartending. Spies now earning from $5,000 to $14,000. . . .

INSIDE FOR MEN

MIDGET PROSTITUTES the biggest thing in German fun-towns. They're 3½ ft. tall on the average, perfectly formed, ARE EXPERT DRUNK-ROLLERS . . . British girls now use their bust measurements on license plates. . . .

Each son of King Ibn-Saud of Arabia is given a Cadillac and driver at age 12. . . .

IF YOU GET HUNG UP ON A PATERNITY RAP, it won't do you any good to get a buddy to testify he also had "carnal knowledge" of the girl. Not unless he can actually produce pictures of the production . . . There have been cases, incidentally, of guys getting snagged in a paternity suit when it's been proven THAT THEY'RE STERILE. . . .

One Brussels Fair attraction not mentioned too much is the night club shows, supposedly the "nudest on the Continent." . . .

Law says a N.Y. boss can advertise for a "gorgeous" secretary, BUT NOT FOR A "YOUNG AND GORGEOUS" ONE . . . London bookdealers carry names of "available" girls in their shop windows . . . A NEW PEEPER SURVEY turned up what you might expect about guys who spy on women (through keyholes, blinds, etc.). MOST ARE BITTER, MOUSY LITTLE GUYS, STRIKE-OUTS WITH WOMEN, and peeping is the only way they can achieve mastery over fair sex—by bruising women with their eyes. . . .

Latest gag sign carried by foreign car enthusiasts: "Made in Virginia by Virgins." . . .

MEN IN UNIFORM

New study shows that most Marine DIs wouldn't act quite so hairy-chested if they didn't think it WAS WHAT TROOPS EXPECTED THEM TO BE LIKE. . . .

ONE MORE PROOF THAT THE ARMY'S STRAC OUTFIT (at-the-ready-strike anywhere) is toughest duty of all: When these boys are

Continued on page 44

GROUP OF FRIENDS ENTHUSIASTIC
Miss Mildred Cade, of Houston, Texas, and a number of her friends are so enthusiastic about this quick, easy way of learning piano that they've ALL taken it up!

NOW GETS MANY INVITATIONS
"It's been fun—and hasn't cost anywhere near as much as having a private teacher. Now invited to all kinds of party affairs, dances. Just auditioned for a place in a Western show called 'Barn Dance Jamboree,' entertaining every Saturday night." — *Howard Hopkins, East Syracuse, N. Y.*

PIANO, GUITAR, ACCORDION—

Yes, OR ANY OTHER INSTRUMENT

Can Now Be Learned at Home by this Quick and Easy Method!

17-Year-Old Student Now Plays Professionally and Teaches

"Have completely mastered the piano accordion. I teach at my fully-equipped studio, and play my accordion at big affairs that pay. I have learned to play any song ever written. You will never realize the amount of training you have given me. I'm now taking your Hawaiian Steel Guitar Course and intend to learn other instruments, too."—*Howard D. Arnold, Bloomingdale, N. J.*

THOUSANDS NOW PLAY WHO DIDN'T EVEN KNOW A SINGLE NOTE BEFORE!

HAVE YOU long wished that you could play a musical instrument? Have you put off learning simply because you thought it would take a lot of money, time, and tiring effort? If so, here's good news for you! Now you can learn to play the piano, guitar, accordion, organ, or one of the other favorite instruments—quickly, easily, and at a small fraction of the usual cost.

Forget everything you've ever heard about the old-fashioned way of learning music. It's no longer necessary to put in endless hours on tedious exercises and scales. You do NOT have to study any "dry-as-dust" theory. You can learn at home, in spare time, without the expense of a private teacher.

Start Playing BY NOTE At Once

With our famous method you *start playing real music right away.* Not with any trick "gimmicks" either! You learn to read *real notes*, with regular *sheet music.* You begin to play simple melodies the very first day. Soon you are playing your favorite pieces with ease and confidence. You'll be amazed at how fast you progress.

It's all so clearly explained with words and pictures—so easy to understand—that even children "catch on" at once. The whole family can learn for the price of one. And the cost is only a few cents a lesson, including over 100 pages of valuable sheet music!

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Over 1,000,000 people in all walks of life have taken up music at home this "Easy As A-B-C" way. Now, all over the world, music lovers are enjoying the thrilling experience of being able to play. They have found the magic key to popularity and good times. You can, too!

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Let this famous home-study method bring the many pleasures of music into YOUR life. New friends. Extra money for playing or teaching. Greater listening enjoyment. Possibly a brilliant, exciting career as a professional musician—like famous TV band-leader Lawrence Welk, one of our former pupils. But best of all, the deep, lifelong satisfaction of being able to make your own music.

Let us prove that every word we say is true. See for yourself why our School has been so successful for 60 years. Just mail the coupon and we'll gladly send you our valuable 36-page FREE BOOK. No obligation. And no salesman will call on you. Clip and mail the coupon NOW, to: **U. S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC, Studio 911, Port Washington, N. Y.** (Special reduced prices on instruments to our students.)

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Lawrence Welk, famous band leader, says:

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I am interested in learning to play, particularly the instrument checked at right. Please send me your free illustrated booklet, "How to Learn Music at Home." NO SALESMAN IS TO TO CALL UPON ME.

Do you have the instrument? .....

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Mrs.
Miss (Please Print Carefully)

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City.....State.....
(Insert Zone Number, If Any)

NOTE: ☐ If you are under 18 years of age check here for booklet "A."

- ☐ Piano
- ☐ Guitar
- ☐ Steel Guitar
- ☐ Violin
- ☐ Piano Accordion
- ☐ Saxophone
- ☐ Trumpet, Cornet
- ☐ Pipe, Electronic, Reed Organ
- ☐ Tenor Banjo
- ☐ Ukulele
- ☐ Clarinet
- ☐ Trombone
- ☐ Flute
- ☐ Piccolo

LAST LAUGHS

"Let's face it—we've got cancer."

A prominent local businessman underwent a serious operation, and the success of it depended largely on artificial feeding, through the south end, looking north.

Once the effects of ether and opiates had worn off, he began to look around, and discovered the feeding machine with its tube at his bedside.

"Good Lord!" he called out to the nurse. "What's that thing for?"

The nurse gently explained.

"All right," said the patient, somewhat pacified. "But I want two more of those machines."

He refused to give any reason for this strange request and finally, to quiet him, she had an orderly bring in two more.

"Now," she said, "I wish you'd tell me why you want them."

The patient smiled sardonically. "Well," he explained, "you and the doctor have been so darned kind that I want you both to have lunch with me tomorrow."

♦♦♦

An old farmer, eating biscuits, sat in his rocking chair on the veranda when he saw a chicken rush by, pursued by a frantic rooster. Suddenly the rooster slid to a stop and started picking up some biscuit crumbs. "Sure hope I'll never get as hungry as that!" exclaimed the farmer.

A young lieutenant in the Army had been waiting for years for his promotion to the rank of captain, and during that time, he had been stationed with his pretty wife on a remote base. One day he left to go on a tour of inspection in the back country and when he returned, he found his house a shambles of over-turned furniture and his pretty wife in hysterics, her clothes torn and hanging almost in shreds from her almost nude body.

"What in the world happened to you?" asked the officer.

"Oh, darling!" she sobbed, throwing her arms around him. "I fought and fought, but he came here to see you and took advantage of the fact that I was alone and he. . . ."

"Who was it?" thundered her husband.

"The major," sobbed the wife.

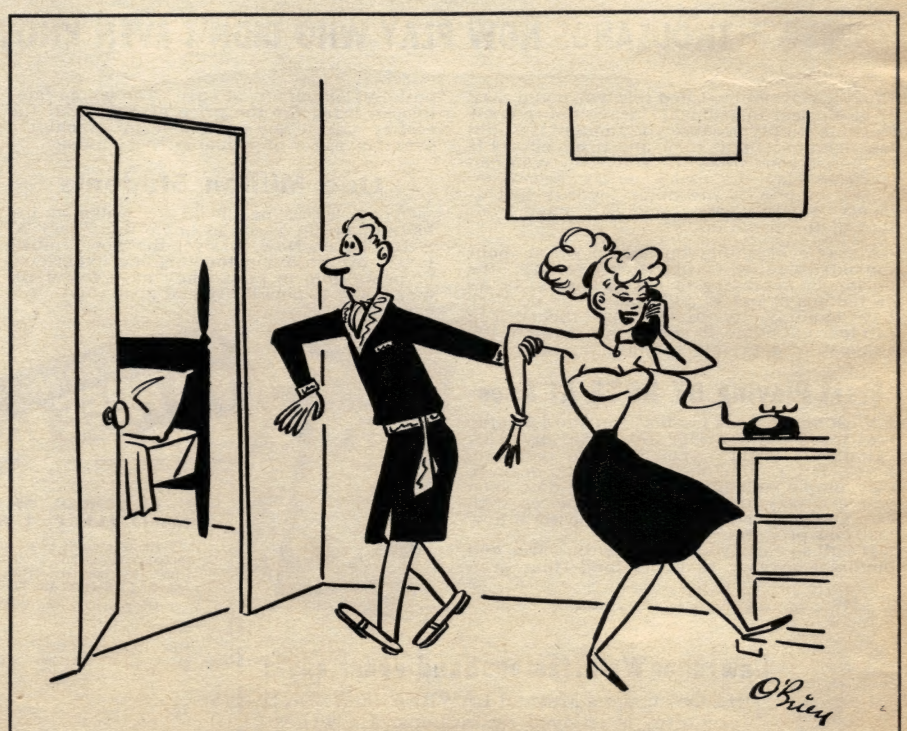
"The major!" The lieutenant's face suddenly brightened. "Did he say anything about my captaincy coming through yet?"

The woman at the track decided to make her selections more scientifically, so to speak. She folded up her program, placed it against the seat in front of her, shut her eyes and plunged her hat pin through it.

Sure enough, she punched seven winners—and the man who'd been sitting in front of her came in second in the race then in progress.

♦♦♦

The operator was about to close the doors of the crowded elevator when a tipsy gentleman pushed his way in. As the car started up he tried to turn around to face the door, but was wedged in so tightly he couldn't move. The other passengers stared into his bloodshot eyes with growing embarrassment. Finally, when the general strain became unbearable, the tipsy man cleared his throat and said, "I expect you're all wondering why I called this meeting."



"I'll call you back in two minutes, Mabel."

Think you can top the editor's sense of humor? It's worth a fresh five-spot if you can. Send your favorite gags to STAG, 655 Madison Avenue, New York 21, N. Y. No limit on the number of submissions, but sorry, no returns, either.

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Earn more money. Enjoy doing important, interesting work. Learn Electrical Appliance Servicing. This is a field of increasing opportunity. Today there is an average of 8 appliances in every wired home. More than eighty million additional appliances, valued at about 8 billion dollars sold in one year. Find out more about this great, growing field. Find out how NRI can train you, at home and in spare time to be an Appliance Service Technician. See how you can start soon to make extra money servicing appliances.

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Opportunities Increasing for Service Technicians

NRI Training is practical, thorough. You get easy-to-understand lessons, *and* NRI supplies parts to build professional type Multi-Use Tester. Use it to get practical experience. Soon, you can add to your income by servicing appliances. Build a profitable *sideline* for your spare time—qualify for a good job—develop a business and be your own boss. As an Appliance Service Technician, your opportunities are broad—your services wanted, gladly paid for, highly regarded in your community.

Appliances are necessary to comfortable, convenient living. Owners pay well to keep them in repair. The field is amazingly big. In addition to major appliances such as electric ranges, air conditioners, refrigerators, there are over 40,000,000 electric irons, 5,000,000 electric blankets, 15,000,000 coffee makers, plus more millions of vacuum cleaners, fans, toasters, mixers, etc.

Find Out What Appliance Repair Offers You

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Please send me Electric Appliance Servicing Lesson and Book FREE. (I understand no salesman will call.)

Name_____ Age_____

Address_____

City_____ Zone_____ State_____

ACCREDITED MEMBER NATIONAL HOME STUDY COUNCIL

Picture yourself going places

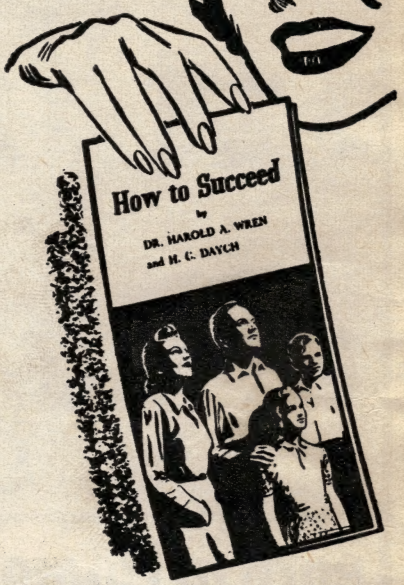
You've done it often. Call it day-dreaming if you like, but you've seen yourself in a bigger job — giving orders and making decisions — driving off in a smart new car — buying your family a fine home.

There's nothing wrong with dreams. But how about making them come true? *You can do it,* if you're willing to try!

Look around you. The men who are going places are the *trained* men. They've learned special skills that bring them better jobs and higher pay. It's the men *without* training whose dreams never come true.

What are you going to do about it? Just wait and wish? If you really *want to succeed,* you can get the training you need by studying at home in your spare time. International Correspondence Schools offer you a course in just about any field you choose, giving you the practical plus the bedrock facts and theory. No skimming or skimping! And you'll be earning while you learn. Students report better jobs and more pay within a few months.

Look over the list of subjects in the coupon below. Pick out the one that interests you most — the one that holds the greatest future for you. Then mark the coupon, and mail it today. *Find out* what I. C. S. can do for you. It costs only a stamp or postcard, but it's the first step if you want to go places!



SMARTEST THING HE EVER DID

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OUT OF THIS WORLD

THE FANTASTIC 116-YEAR RESCUE—Trapped in an isolated Sinai Desert fortress during World War I, a small detachment of British troops were about ready to throw in the towel. They were ringed by German soldiers and hostile

Arab tribesmen, and their supplies had dwindled to the point where only a pint of water per man was on hand. Suddenly, one of the sentries broke into the office of Captain Cazal—commander of the garrison—pushing an incredibly ancient Arab sheik before him.

"Sir, this man claims he has a letter to deliver to you."

Captain Cazal took the faded, folded scrap of paper that the Arab held out to him and spread it carefully.

"It's written in French," he grunted, then proceeded to translate it aloud to his aide-de-camp.

"My dear Cazal, immediately upon receipt of this order, which I am sending you by a native boy, you will dig up the provisions and munitions buried beneath the fort. After taking what you require, destroy the surplus and withdraw in the direction of the Egyptian frontier. Out of three routes available, do not use any coastal route. March down the central route straight through the desert. Guard the accompanying map, which shows the location of water holes, as you would the apple of your eye.

(Signed) Napoleon Bonaparte"

Cazal looked up at the old man standing before him.

"Where did you get this note?" he demanded.

"I received it from the hands of Napoleon, himself," the Arab explained. "He told me to deliver it to Captain Cazal—no other."

"But that's impossible!" cried Cazal. "Napoleon's Egyptian campaign took place about 115 years ago!"

"I know," replied the sheik. "I was a young man of 25 when Napoleon asked me to deliver the message. But when I arrived at the fort, it had already been abandoned. It wasn't until now that I heard the name Cazal and remembered to deliver the letter again."

Captain Cazal turned to his aide. "You know, my great-grandfather did serve in Napoleon's army and was killed somewhere around here in 1799. Have the men start digging up the garrison for those supplies!"

Oddly enough, they found food, water and arms—not those left by Napoleon, but supplies buried there by German and Turkish troops several months before. By following the ancient map, Captain Cazal managed to bring his lost battalion out of an impossible situation in good shape. This was the last stroke of military genius ever performed by Napoleon Bonaparte—a maneuver which saved a British army unit over a century later, with the help of a messenger who carried out his mission at the age of 141.

♦♦♦

TRAFFIC JAM IN OUTER SPACE—To get an idea of how infinitesimal our planet Earth is in relation to outer space, consider the following facts: 1. Earth is one of a belt of nine planets that orbit around the sun. 2. The sun—a star which is for all practical purposes a continuously exploding hydrogen bomb—is moving at a speed of 500,000 miles per hour around the outer edges of what we call the Milky Way. 3. The Milky Way is a system composed of 100,000 million stars, whose combined total is known as a galaxy. 4. There are an estimated billion other galaxies rushing through space, at speeds up to 100,000,000 miles an hour. 5. With all this outer space activity, you'd think there would be constant collision of stars as they fling themselves furiously in their orbits. But physicists have estimated

that a collision occurs only once every 600 billion years. Frantic N.Y.C. traffic policemen, please take note.

GUARDIAN OF THE ROYAL HAREM—For obvious reasons, eunuchs were the only males permitted inside a royal harem. This tradition existed whether the harem

belonged to an African potentate, an Arabian sultan, a Persian shah or a Chinese emperor. However, one of the least known duties of a eunuch attached to the Chinese imperial court was to keep track of any harem member's visit to the exalted one's bedchamber. When the emperor felt like feminine company, he would summon his eunuch, tell him which of the concubines he wished for that night, then leave everything in his trusted servant's hands. The eunuch would mark the girl's name down in his journal, escort her to his master's bedroom, then retire discreetly outside the door. As soon as the sun showed signs of rising, the eunuch would creep into the sleeping quarters, awaken the girl without disturbing the emperor, then guide her back to her rooms. But he was very careful to make sure that he had her name entered properly alongside the date of her visit—for this was the only way the emperor could be sure that any offspring born to her was legitimate.

♦♦♦

TOPS IN POPS—Chances are no one will ever match the marital feats of two African kings—Mushidi of Budkey, in the Belgian Congo, and Behanzin of Dahomey. Mushidi had so many wives that he couldn't keep track of them. According to Bob "Believe It Or Not" Ripley, he acquired more than 5,000 in his lifetime—including several hundred he paid out in tribute each year to the ruler of Loanga. By actual census, he fathered 910 children before he was tried, convicted and executed for the murder of 27 of his spouses. Not too far behind Mushidi, King Behanzin checked in with 902 children. But what is most intriguing about the ruler of Dahomey is the fact that he was supreme commander of an army of 5,000 Amazons—the pick of the most gorgeous virgins in his realm. ♦♦♦

Half-delirious from hunger and thirst, the shipwrecked seamen were hauled ashore by the strange natives of Tabelbala.

Art by Mort Künstler

MAROONED IN PARADISE

A board of inquiry ruled that there is no such place as Tabelbala. Yet he insists that, ever since he survived the Battle of the Coral Sea, he lived a fabulous adventure on a strange South Sea island of Arabs.

by ROBERT J. FULLER

ON APRIL 15, 1957, the Japanese naval authorities, in session at Yokohama, heard the last testimony offered in the case of Seaman Akio Mitanabe. The sailor sought 15 years' back pay and a document to the effect that he had served Japan honorably to the credit of his family name. The court of inquiry found in his favor.

Mitanabe's case was saved by three facts which the court found to be indisputable. He was properly identified by his fingerprints. Official records placed him on a ship of the *Haruna* class in the Coral Sea in late April of 1942. Both United States and Japanese governmental accounts of the Battle of the Coral Sea proved that Mitanabe's ship was sunk by naval gunfire at a time when he was known to be aboard her. All other testimony offered by the seaman in his own behalf was entirely discounted as bizarre and utterly fantastic daydreams of a sailor marooned too long on a South Sea island. The court, frankly, thought Akio Mitanabe was crazy.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

"I was on an AA gun mount when the ship was rocked by a series of explosions. Naval gunners were scoring direct hits."

MAROONED IN PARADISE

Akio, a college student before he entered the Japanese Imperial Navy shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, spent the entire sum awarded him in an effort to prove he was not crazy. And he had two other good reasons for going through what was a large fortune. He wanted to relocate the island where he had spent almost 15 years to exploit the rich minerals he had found there, and he wished to spend the remainder of his life in what he termed to be a paradise.

"I was on an AA gun mount with three close friends," Akio stated, "and we were trying to locate American planes by ear because the fog hid them from our sight. All of a sudden the ship was rocked by a series of explosions. Either a submarine had fired a torpedo into a below-decks magazine, high-flying planes had dropped several bombs on us, or 16-inch rifle shells were fired into us by an American capital ship."

Miraculously, Akio and the three other gunners were thrown clear of the ship and into the Coral Sea. Masao Yamamoto, who came from Tokyo, as did Mitanabe, had clutched an inflatable rubber raft as he went over the side and blossomed it in the water. He and Akio climbed into the raft and searched in the fog for other survivors. The groans of Nao Shigeru, a gunner from Shimosuwa on the island of Honshu, led them toward him and he was hauled into the raft. Shigeru had a wide and deep gash running from his right armpit across his chest and his stomach, apparently inflicted by shrapnel or flying ship's plates. While Akio tried to help his buddy with the meager supplies in the first aid kit, Masao discovered the unconscious body of Boatswain Orri Tyoto, who had enlisted from Hiwasi on Shikoku. At one point, they caught sight of another raftful of survivors, but it drifted away in the fog and they never saw it again. Then Tyoto recovered and took charge of the party.

"We've got to get away from here," Tyoto commanded. "If that ship goes down, she'll suck us down, too."

"We should try to find other survivors," Akio suggested. "We have room for half a dozen more in the raft."

"Like hell," Orri contradicted. "We'll be lucky to save our own skin. Leave them to the rescue parties that will take over after the battle."

Confident that the Imperial Navy would win the sea battle and that destroyers would screen the area for survivors as soon as the fighting let up, the three unwounded sailors began paddling furiously away from the stricken battleship. Tyoto made them keep at it for more than 45 minutes, by which time they were exhausted. Shigeru was moaning in agony and his companions doubted that he would live very long. He died during the night, and was committed to the sea.

With daybreak and increased visibility, the Japanese knew a sinking fear which grew as the hours passed. Apparently the fleet had either been sunk or had withdrawn from the area. They were alone and dangerously close to Allied territory.

"To the west lies Australia," the boastwain itemized their circumstances, "and New Guinea is to the north. South and east are the New Hebrides and New Caledonia. Our best bet is to set a course northeast and try to raise Honiara on Guadalcanal."

"How far are we from Guadalcanal?" Akio wanted to know.

"Between 500 and 1,000 nautical miles," Orri guessed.

"We'll never make it," Masao whined. "We haven't even got a compass."

"We have the sun and the stars," Tyoto said.

The other two survivors were completely in the hands of Tyoto, a fisherman in civilian life. Although he did not know the area they were abandoned in, he did know the ways of the sea and simple navigation. They headed in what they supposed to be a northeasterly direction.

Akio Mitanabe described the agony the men went through for the next two weeks with the simple statement,

Nearby they spotted another raftful of seamen, but after a few minutes the fog swallowed it up and they never saw it again.

"In the day, the sun made us writhe in pain and our tongues swelled from thirst. An occasional and brief shower kept us alive and, when the emergency rations in the raft ran out, we fell into a weak stupor."

The Pacific currents and the wind eventually wrested control of the raft away from the weakened sailors and, instead of heading northeast, they drifted in a southeasterly direction.

"We'll land in the New Hebrides," Masao cried, "and the Americans will execute us."

"That's better than a slow death out here," the boatswain pointed out. "And maybe we'll be able to take at least one Yankee with us."

But the raft did not raise the New Hebrides although it ran very close to that group of islands. An offshore current took the men due south, beyond the New Hebrides and to the east of New Caledonia.

New Caledonia is the largest island in the Loyalty Islands, a French possession. Its main port and capital, Nouméa, was a staging area for the United States fleet, and the inner island was used for camps, hospitals and airstrips by the Army and Marine Corps. To the east of the main island lie the three smaller islands of Uvea, Lifou and Mare. Between these three good-sized islands are many small—some uncharted—spots of land. The rubber raft grounded on one of these specks between Lifou and Mare.

"We shook in terror as we crawled up the beach toward the fringe of palm trees," Akio recalled. "We expected swarms of Americans to attack us and cut our heads off. We were too weak to even attempt to kill one in retaliation. Instead we were dragged ashore by a hostile-looking group of natives."

Akio gave the court a sketchy description of the island which he called Tabelbala. "It was a lush island, canopied by green palm fronds and carpeted by a profusion of tropical plants. Nature was generous to Tabelbala and there was plenty to eat and there was more than enough clean, cool water."

"Why do you call the island 'Tabelbala?' " the court officers demanded. "The maps show no such place name."

"That's what the Arabs called it," Akio answered simply.

"Arabs?"

"Yes, sir. Tabelbala is inhabited by Arabs," Akio said. It was then that the officers began to suspect his sanity. "They named it for a village in Algeria."

"That's very interesting," a lieutenant smiled. "An Arab community in the heart of the South Seas."

"Yes, sir," Akio agreed.

"I suppose they wore flowing burnooses," the officer said.

"Yes, sir."

"And rode Arabian steeds?"

"No, sir. There were no horses on Tabelbala."

"What else was there on this fabulous island?" the amused lieutenant prodded.

"There were beautiful, fair-skinned islanders."

"Fair-skinned islanders," the officer mused. "The islands you mention fall in Melanesia. Melanesians are black-skinned by definition."

"Yes, sir," Akio conceded. "But these islanders were Polynesians."

"You have made a great discovery," the lieutenant sarcastically congratulated Mitanabe. "You have not only raised a new island, but populated it with the anthropological miracle of Algerian Arabs and voloptuous Polynesians. All in a Melanesian area where there is no island."

"Yes, sir," Akio responded obediently.

"I awoke as in a nightmare," Akio continued. "Standing over me and the other two men were dark-eyed, fierce-featured North Africans. They had a kind of robe draped over them, the material of which had been hammered out of tree bark. They possessed long and wicked-looking knives and indicated that they intended to kill us."

One of the Arabs spoke to (*Continued on page* 66)

US
US

A CIRCLE OF COFFINS FOR COMPANY C

For the 32 recruits sweating out 3,000 rampaging Sioux, it was their first battle. And their wagon-box barricades could be their last resting place.

by EDWARD A. DIECKMANN

CAPTAIN James Powell, commanding C Company, 27th US Infantry, was a greatly concerned man that morning of August 2, 1867. Being concerned wasn't a new feeling, but there are degrees of anxiety. Ever since the regiment began to build Fort Phil Kearney a year before, the post had been under close siege by Chief Red Cloud's Sioux, and his Cheyenne and Arapaho allies. Hardly a day passed without a fight of some sort. It meant a continual alert.

And now—out here seven miles from the fort where his company made up the guard for the civilian woodcutting camp on the Big Piney River—Captain Powell's apprehensiveness was intensified.

He'd had to split his tiny command to cover the three main functions of his responsibility. Twelve soldiers under a veteran sergeant to guard the woodcutting camp in the woods. Thirteen more, under another sergeant, to act as escort for the wood train that made a daily trip back to the fort. With the remaining 26 men of his company, and his lieutenant, John C. Jenness, he'd established headquarters in the center of a grassy plain.

The captain was thankful for two things: the fact that his men were armed with the new Springfield breech-loading rifles—.50 caliber weapons—and that he had a tight little organization. True enough, most of his men were still in the recruit stage. But he had a hard core of noncommissioned officers led by bearded First Sergeant John M. Hoover, Sergeant John H. McQuiery and Sergeant Francis Robertson, ably assisted by Corporal Max Littmann, late of the Prussian Army.

Powell and his noncoms had made Company C into a battle-ready team—an all-for-one-one-for-all outfit—with a solid background of discipline that wasn't of the hard-boiled, blustering do-it-or-else sort so usual in the armed forces. The veteran captain had instilled an organizational pride in each man's heart.

The little, but very special, non-regulation touches that he encouraged helped accomplish this. First Sergeant Hoover's manner of conducting roll call at formations was one of them. It was a bit of a show-off stunt, of course, but it made Company C stand out in the regiment and that was what Captain Powell wanted.

Hoover didn't use a muster list. He rattled off the names of 53 men from memory, in alphabetical order, while the outfit's mascot—a mongrel named Jess—sat out in front of the ranks, head cocked to one side, as if he was waiting for Hoover to forget a name. And then there were the extra-special flourishes the company drummer, a kid of 15 named Jimmy Hines, used when he beat out first call for reveille.

The men of Company C bragged about these things, and were ready to fight anyone who had any disparaging remarks to make about it. It could be said, and with a lot of truth, that (*Continued on page* 70)

For the third time, hundreds of howling Indians swarmed up to the corral. The troopers held their fire until the last minute.
Art by Tom Ryan

the $60,000,000 Hot Diamond Swindle

by FRANK ELLIS

They're shaping up for an all-out land-sea-air assault on the two-sided smuggling operation along Skeleton Coast. Targets of the projected crackdown are "Mr. Big" of the Western world and agents of Russia's desperate industrial machine.

Surrounded by barbed-wire and armed guards. Skeleton Coast is 600 miles of gem-strewn sand.

Licensed operators run trenches along the beaches, sift samples to determine richest pay-dirt areas.

Most stones—hot or legit—still are produced by the deep blue-clay pipe mines of eastern Africa.

Customs men easily spotted the woman who tried to sneak stones past in this false-bottomed bag.

It took a new gadget, the Inspectorscope, to see the diamonds hidden in the sides of this crate.

You'd think the back of a clothesbrush—part of a matched toilet set—would be safe, but it wasn't.

Kneeling in the scorched desert, the two haggard men worked feverishly as they tried to shield themselves from the hot wind driving the stinging sand into their faces. Scooping up handfuls of the yellow-gray sand, they shook them through a fine-meshed sifter. Beside them was a small burlap bag into which they dropped gleaming chips of clear white, pink or lemon-yellow diamonds.

Something made the shorter of the two, pudgy Carl Heuss, look up. On the horizon toward the south, he could make out an approaching plane.

"Police patrol!" he yelled.

"What do we do?" asked the other, lank, rawboned Raymond Fitch.

"Dig in fast."

Clawing at the sand, they made shallow graves and covered themselves from view, only their sweating faces showing. The plane zoomed over, but for a while after that they lay still. If they were caught poaching for diamonds here in the "Sperrgepiet," the forbidden area of South Africa's Namib desert, a stretch in prison awaited them.

Only a couple of hours before, they had passed a solemn sign in English, Afrikaans and German: "WARNING. Prohibited Diamond Area. Penalty £500 or five years' imprisonment."

The two American ex-GIs, who considered themselves adventurers, had rented a small cruiser at Capetown and anchored during the night outside the tiny port of Pomona, south of the diamond capital of Luderitz. At dawn, they had moved to an isolated expanse of beach and gone ashore in a dinghy through the huge waves. Along this 600-mile strip of southwest Africa —Skeleton Coast—diamonds of all kinds and shapes were lying around barely below the surface, so that a solid kick could send precious baubles flying.

Fitch sat up and began brushing the sand from his clothes. Suddenly, Heuss let out a scream.

"I've been bitten!"

He sprang to his feet and grabbed his right arm. Slithering away was a four-foot puff adder. With a sob, Heuss put his mouth to the swelling red spot on his forearm and sucked at it.

"These damn African adders are poisonous," said Fitch. "We'd better get back to a doctor quick."

They tried to run, but progress along the dunes in the blistering noonday sun was slow. Behind them, the returning police plane cut its engines and silently glided by them, unnoticed until it was too late. The trespassers had made the mistake of leaving their metal sifter shining in the sun when they pulled the blanket of sand over them. The police pilot radioed to the government camel-mounted patrol and in half an hour the two poachers were under arrest. Their burlap bag contained over $12,000 worth of diamonds. Only Fitch, however, was to serve time behind bars. His partner died the next day from the adder bite.

Defying the many risks—from Nature's hazards and the ever-alert police—men who gamble for the quick buck are lured from all over the world to the desolate wasteland of South Africa's Namib. For here literally billions of dollars in rough gems and industrial diamonds are lying around, waiting to be plucked from the sands like windfalls on the ground under your backyard apple tree.

In the face of all precautions against the raids, illegal fortunes are being made every year in the hot ice. At a recent conference of Interpol (International Police Association), it was reported that more than £10,000,000 worth of diamonds are "lost" annually by the legitimate producers. Unofficial sources more than double this figure. Diamond smuggling has increased so greatly since 1950 that leaders in the industry had to hire Sir Percy Sillitoe, former chief of MI 5, the British counterintelligence service, to head (*Continued on page* 54)

STAG True Book BONUS

THE LEGEND OF WILD JACK GASCAR

by NEIL PRITCHIE

For a woman he deserted the army. For a place to hide he joined the Legion. And for the rest of his unnatural life, he and his private band of outcasts turned Africa into a bloody madhouse.

SERGEANT Jack Gascar, a handsome Canadian in his mid-twenties, dressed in British army gear, stood in the gloomy shadows of a forest peering out at the wire fence hastily thrown across the road to Lyons. He clicked off the safety on his Webley, then slid it loosely back in its holster. The two MPs guarding the roadblock were Americans, but now they had become his enemies.

It was September 15, 1944, exactly a month to the day since the Allied assault in the area between Cannes and Hyères on the southern coast of France. All through that month he had seen his buddies maimed and killed in the steamroller drive north. Just four days back the last of them were slaughtered at Dijon and the whole campaign ended in victory. Now Gascar was heading south again, alone —determined that nothing but death itself would stop him.

PLEASE TURN TO NEXT PAGE

Overwhelming the Tuaregs, the ex-Legionnaires took over their camels and women.
Art by Charles Copeland

The smugglers left the kasbah in pairs. Disguised as a civilian, Gascar slipped unchallenged through the checkpoints.

THE LEGEND OF WILD JACK GASCAR

Gascar strapped on his field pack, looped his helmet on it, slung his rifle and marched out into the twilight. As he approached the wire fence in long easy strides, the Americans wheeled to face him, both pointing their carbines at his chest.

"Hold it!" one of them snapped. "Identify yourself, soldier!"

"Hermann Göering. Looking for a friend named Adolf."

"Get your hands up! Save the wisecracks and identify yourself!"

They were as arrogant as any MPs. Gascar raised his hands high. "Henry Lopshire's the name. Corporal. I'm on my way to Lyons to take back a deserter. My jeep broke down a few kilometers back and I'm in a hell of a hurry."

"Hurry, eh? You don't sound like a Limey to me. More like an American, like a Minnesota Heinie, or something."

"You got papers from your commanding officer?" asked the second MP.

Editor's Note: The terrifying career of Jack Gascar began in World War II and ended in an insurrection in Madagascar. If it had not been for that, his story would have made the front pages instead of being buried in isolated newspaper items. As it was, the story had to be reconstructed from sources not easily accessible. Island peasants in Pantelleria, jungle tribes and colonial government officials, Foreign Legionnaires, as well as rebel prisoners in Madagascar have given testimony. Most important of all, there is the Sultanate of Zanzibar police report based on a statement given by Gascar himself under circumstances as fantastic as the life of this reckless adventurer and criminal.

It was a mistake using the American idiom and accent he had picked up during his years on various cattle ranches down through Montana in the States. The Germans were in the habit of using American nationals for infiltration purposes, and he might be one of them for all these MPs knew. He had counted on being listed as *missing in action,* but there might be a check, and admitting that he was a Canadian would make it that much easier to trace him.

"You got a sharp ear, brother," Gascar said. "I'm from Billings, Montana, but I couldn't wait. Enlisted at Liverpool and been fighting Krauts long before you country-club commandos ever reached your first rear echelon. May I take my hands down now, or you figure I'm about to retake Lyons for Hitler?"

Tensely he watched them in the gathering dusk. Then one MP said, "All right, take them down. But stay wide of that automatic." Both carbines were still trained on him. "Let's see your papers."

Gascar let out a sigh, lowering his hands, one taking hold of his rifle sling, the other out wide but ready to dart for the Webley. "Look, my CO wasn't expecting me to be stopped in a jeep with a riveted travel tag. Go telephone your corps headquarters in Lyons and check on me. This guy I have to pick up, the deserter, his name is Porley. I'm detailed to bring him back."

"What the hell's a travel tag?" asked the other MP.

"Never mind, Frank. Some Limey stuff, I guess. Frank, you go get the OD and I'll keep this guy right here."

In the distance a motor droned; the sound was coming closer. One of the MPs slung his carbine and walked off while the other kept his weapon pointed. The man wore a flat, hostile look as he said, "Personally, I think you're a Kraut. Who's Betty Grable?"

"Hollywood blonde." All at (*Continued on page* 86)

Gascar bought wine from one of the Ouled Nail. She gave him a practiced smile and asked, in French, "May I dance for you?"

A camel-borne column of Tuaregs ambushed the detachment, but after the fight, only their animals were still alive.

Besides adventurers, French officers found many young idealists of French descent supporting the Madagascan revolution.

Convoys of reinforcements driving through the jungle-lined roads were easy targets for snipers concealed in the bush.

THE FIVE SINGSONG GIRLS OF STOCKADE 9

The Reds tried everything from solitary to thumbscrews, but nothing worked on the holdouts in Hut 13. Then Lt. Sung dreamed up the subtlest torture in the Far East.

by AUSTIN MASON

STAG FICTION

Their first glimpse of the Reds' latest addition to psychological warfare came to the men of Stockade Nine a few minutes after the scuttlebutt leaked out that Commander Li Po had retired to his quarters, suffering from a severe attack of the "gout," and leaving command of the camp to Lieutenant Sung. At least that's what the report was. But to the men in Hut 13 it became apparent, in the days that followed, that the cagey old colonel had seen the trouble coming and wanted no part of it.

They had gotten a hint of it late the night before when a truck arrived all the way from Peiping. Donaldson, the scrawny, acned kid, had heard it first and given the signal. By the time its headlights dimmed three of them were pressed against the opening that passed for a window.

Big Gaffke had shouldered his way through. "Knock it off back there," he whispered hoarsely. The warning was passed back to the men in the tunnel.

"Must be five or six," he said, scowling. "Hell of a lot of gear," he muttered.

The others pressed against the window. Outside it was almost pitch black. All they could make out were the shadows, which were already entering the officers' barracks.

"Hear anything, kid?" said Gaffke.

Donaldson closed his eyes in concentration; then nodded a dismal negative. "I can't make it out," he said at last.

"Hah, Dumbo," Gaffke snorted contemptuously; for the kid had the reputation of being able to hear lice crawling at 20 yards. Donaldson looked resentfully now toward Gaffke, who turned away briskly.

"That's that, I guess," the big man spoke sharply. "Let's get back to work." He didn't miss a chance to needle the kid with the big ears.

They'd hardly turned when they heard another commotion.

"It's the officers," the kid whispered incredulously from his post near the window.

Breathlessly they waited. The marching feet approached, then went past. The gooks were muttering under their breaths. Donaldson turned, his face one big question mark. "They got their bedrolls with 'em," he said.

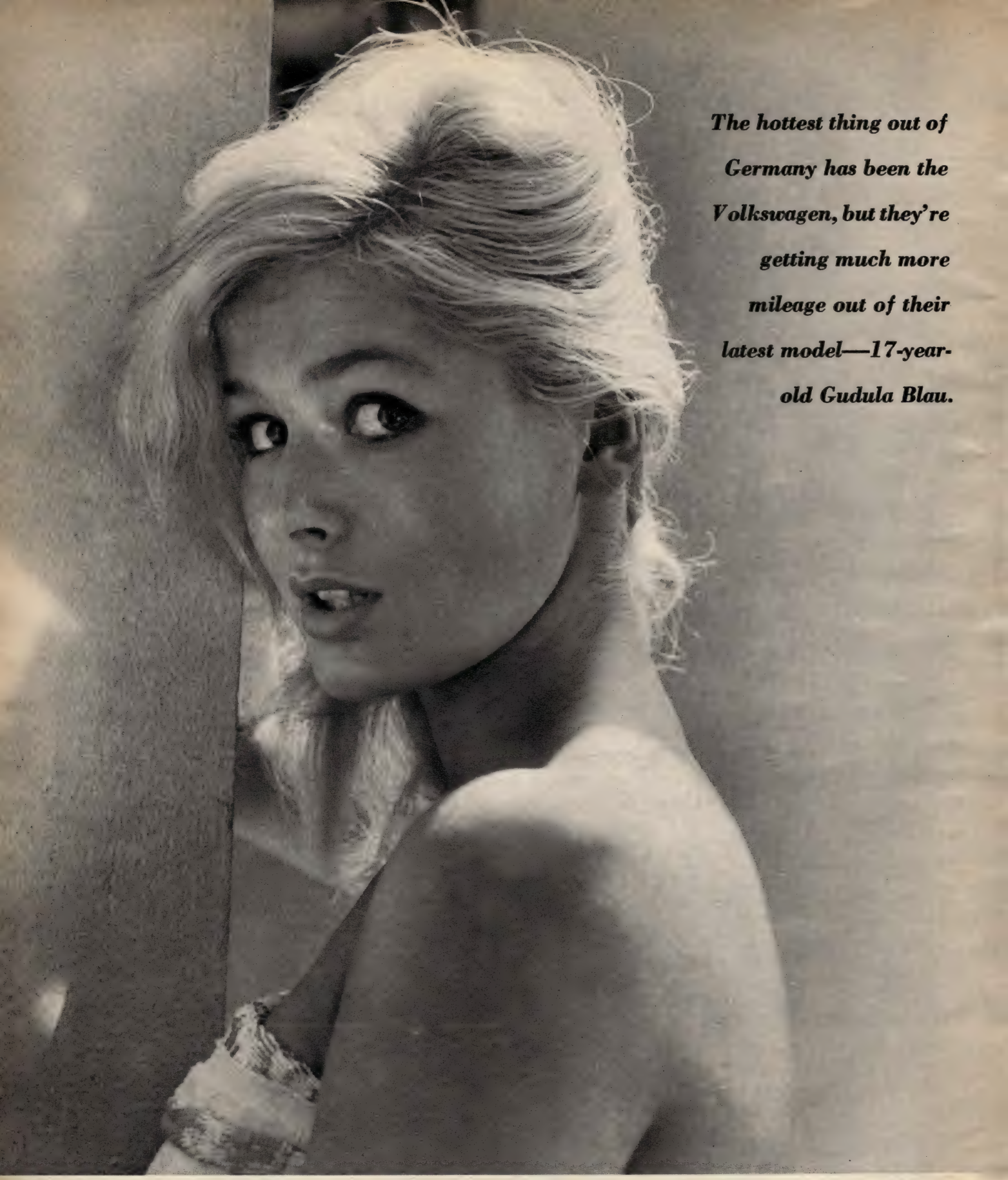
Then from farther away they heard a few shouted orders. "They're taking over their NCOs' barracks."

And sure enough the next thing they heard was the high, yapping voice of Sergeant Quoin Lu. Gradually, that disturbance, too, died down. Standing there in a circle, the men looked from one to another and then at Gaffke, trying to figure out what was up. It wasn't until the next morning that they found out. In the meantime the escape tunnel was pushed another six feet.

It was the morning inspection. Lieutenant Sung made especially certain that they were at their best appearance. Gaffke was hauled out for perhaps the 30th time and given as many strokes across his bared back for not trimming his beard, whose thick foliage seemed especially to enrage the smooth-cheeked lieutenant. That finished, the men were lined up at attention once more. Then the bugler started to blow. But it wasn't the gook equivalent of the Sunrise Serenade they (*Continued on page* 76)

Gaffke didn't budge from his usual spot as the girls began a tantalizing, hip-swinging promenade across the compound.

Art by Al Rossi



The hottest thing out of Germany has been the Volkswagen, but they're getting much more mileage out of their latest model—17-year-old Gudula Blau.

Search for the

Unknown Fraulein

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

The prediction is that once they start showing starlet Gudula's pictures, Italy's Gina and Sophia will be heading for the hills.

SEARCH FOR THE UNKNOWN FRAULEIN

FOR YOUR

THE HANDYMAN—Scotland Yard detectives were examining the body of an old man on the floor of a tacky London apartment. "The old bloke's head was caved in with an andiron," one said, "but who swung it? What's the motive? We don't have very much, do we, gentlemen?" The others nodded no, and they all began to leave.

A well-dressed man in his 20s was passing the door and

asked if he could look at one of the bloody handprints on the wall. He could probably help. "What the hell," the desperate detective said. "Let him. You never know." The man studied the print, closed his eyes and concentrated. Then he spoke: "The murderer is young, rich, carries a gold watch in his left front trousers pocket, and is a relative of the dead man."

The detectives threw him out—a crackpot as they'd thought at first. But a few days later they found the killer. He was young, rich, had a gold watch—and was the dead man's son.

That was in 1893. The palm-reader called himself Cheiro, only Cheiro, but after the way he'd called the shot on the murder, the papers called him Cheiro the Great. He began predicting the future for rich clients, and soon was getting rich himself. Not every paper believed in him, however.

In New York, where he opened a fine Park Avenue office, the New York World flung this challenge at him: Look at 13 unidentified palmprints, then describe the persons who made them. If he couldn't, he was a fraud. If he refused, he was a fraud. Cheiro accepted.

The test was held. Of the first print he said: "This man is Irish. He once did hard labor, but is now rich and powerful. He was once also a wrestler, and is a speaker with a flair for politics." The judging audience gasped. The print belonged to Richard Croker, an Irish immigrant hod carrier who had become boss of Tammany Hall.

Of others, he said one was a musical genius (Reginald de Koven, composer of "Robin Hood"). Another was an unhappy actress (Lillian Russell). And so on. The New York World made its apologies. It had to admit Cheiro was indeed great.

He claimed he didn't understand his power, he only knew that he had it, but that made no difference. Famous people came and paid well to know their futures. He told a scoffing Oscar Wilde that in five years he would be disgraced in a homosexuality scandal. He was. Cheiro named the date King Edward of England would die. In Moscow in 1907, he looked at an unidentified set of prints and said: "This man will be unhappy and haunted by fear of war. In 1917, he will lose everything, including his life." The man was Tsar Nicholas.

Then his predictions began going wrong. He lost his confidence and his clients. In 1909, he was involved in stock scandals, spent 13 months in jail, and when he got out nobody cared about a Cheiro who was no longer great. He was forgotten, and in 1936 died of a stroke on a Hollywood back street. It was an ironic end. One future he'd never been able to predict was his own.

LAST PARADISE LOST—The Marquesas Islands are a French possession, 2,000 miles south of Hawaii. They are lovely islands, where a man can literally pick dinner from a tree in his back yard. A hundred years ago, the Marquesan natives numbered 100,000 strong tattooed men and slim, uninhibited females who wore almost no clothes. As it was in all of Polynesia, sex was a thing to be enjoyed by anyone any time they chose. Men said hello to women with sex. A woman would thank a man for a basket of fruit with sex. Because of this freedom, sailors from the whaling ships loved the Marquesas perhaps best of all the islands. Missionaries condemned them for the same reason.

When this paradise turned into hell, it was the same

sailors and missionaries who caused it. They brought the white man's diseases—tuberculosis and measles, fatal to the natives who had never been exposed to them and had no immunity. The worst was VD. In 1929, anthropologists found that the 100,000 strong men and women had been

INFORMATION

cut down to 1,600, and more were still dying. The noble savages were now skinny, feeble, part-white part-island half-breeds.

One of the anthropologists, Dr. Harry Shapiro, curator of anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, returned to the Marquesas recently, and found things better. French doctors with antibiotics had managed to check the death rate.

The lost paradise can never be regained, however. Disease and a century of crossbreeding with the white man have left less than a dozen purebred islanders. Tattoos, once the symbol of Marquesan manhood, are nowhere in sight.

TWO-FACED PILL—A man in Peoria, Illinois, recently told his doctor: "My wife and I can't afford to have a baby just yet, and we worry about pregnancy constantly. The worry's ruining our relationship. We hear these new contraceptive pills are great. We'd like to get some."

The doctor told him to stay away from them, even if he could get some, and the doctor had good reason to be cautious. The pills are high-concentrate man-made steroid hormones, which are similar to the natural hormones produced in a woman's body. When the pills were first developed, the story on them was that they would be available to everyone, as easy to take as aspirin, and 100 per cent sure. Everybody wanted them. What better way to prevent pregnancy and get peace of mind than by simply taking a pill? The trouble was that the pills were not all people wanted to believe they were, and possibly more trouble than they're worth.

Tests made on 600 women at the University of California have turned up sobering news. In order for the steroid hormones to work, a woman must take one pill a day for 20 days of her 28-day menstrual cycle. There can be no dallying on this. By working on the pituitary gland, the pills inhibit ovulation. Without ovulation, a woman cannot become pregnant. But the rub is that if she neglects the pill just one day, she may easily ovulate—and become pregnant.

Ironically, the same pills can also be used to increase the chances of successful pregnancy. If taken after the time a woman ovulates, the steroids stimulate the uterus lining. In cases where miscarriage threatens, this strengthening of the uterus may make the difference between the mother's holding and losing the embryo.

HANKY-PANKY—An army corporal stationed in Hamburg was watching a very pretty fraulein walk past the beer garden where he was drinking Lowenbrau. As she passed, she winked at him, and dropped her handkerchief. He gulped his brew, picked up the cloth she'd dropped and started to follow her. Then he looked at it and threw it down in disgust. Printed on it was: "Soccer Match This Sunday at the Stadium."

The girl with the roving eye and the handbill handkerchief wasn't playing jokes. She was a working girl, out to earn a day's pay in a crazy, but effective, advertising campaign that started in Hamburg and is spreading to other European cities.

The way it works is simple: The printed handkerchiefs plug beer, cameras, cigarettes, anything. Pretty girls are hired to walk the streets and drop them at their discretion, particularly where GIs and American seamen congregate, and to give a good wink so they'll be sure to pick them up.

Reason for singling out Americans: US soldiers and sailors and overseas workers are more likely to buy the items because even privates are still paid better than most European civilians and have more money to spend.

However, the new campaign hadn't even gotten up steam when something happened that the ad men hadn't counted on. Many opportunistic girls were turning the idea to their own personal gain. One girl's hanky that was picked up did not have a beer ad, but: "Call Irmgard. 9120."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?—Marathon flagpole sitter "Shipwreck" Kelly was top man in his field back in the desperate depression when most men had no field at all. Real name James Kelly, he and his preposterous profession supplied kicks at a time when kicks were few. When people worried about money, they could always talk about six-day bike races and Shipwreck Kelly and forget. His record aloft was 47 days, set in Denver in 1932. It towered over other efforts until 1948 when his better half, Emma, proved herself a better man than Shipwreck by perching over Chattanooga for 60 days. Today, though he's down from his flagpole for good, Kelly is still in the sitting business. He is an upholsterer in San Francisco. ◆◆◆

The DESPERATE CROSSING OF CAPTAIN INCH

Out of 657 people who sailed from Rotterdam aboard the immigrant ship Volturno, 132 were destined to get no farther than halfway across the Atlantic.

Clinging to the cargo net strung over the Volturno's side, crewmen handed women down a human ladder to the boats.

Art by Joe Little

by A. A. HOEHLING

ON A calm October evening, midway between the British Isles and New York, the small Dutch tanker *Charlois* hove to alongside a burned derelict of the sea lanes. Its stern bore the name *Volturno*.

Captain Schmidt lowered a boat over the side and boarded the derelict. The decks were hot, smoke wisped from a score of torn, blackened hatchways; in the forecastle he found several charred bodies.

The ship was deserted and entirely burned out; its bulkheads looked like the walls of a fire-swept building. Furniture, railings, paneling, wire insulation—everything combustible—had been reduced to cinders. Not a lifeboat was to be seen at the davits.

There was no radio on the *Charlois*. So far as Schmidt knew, not a soul had survived. So the Dutch captain resolved to scuttle the wreck and get it off the sea lanes. A group of his sailors cautiously descended to the engine room where they opened the sea cocks.

Within the hour, the *Volturno* was gone, a hiss of steam

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

her nautical requiem. The *Charlois* continued her voyage. . . .

Eight days before, the *Volturno,* out of Rotterdam, butted through a howling gale. She was a medium-sized vessel, 3,600 tons, and loaded to her Plimsoll line with cargo: oils, wines, gin, burlap, rags, peat moss, chemicals and other merchandise.

She also carried 564 passengers, most of them immigrants in steerage. They came from the Balkans, from the Levant, from Poland and, in smaller numbers, from Germany.

Those of the Jewish faith were awaiting Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement which would commence the next morning. One rabbi had accompanied them, bringing the shophar, or ceremonial ram's horn trumpet, and the sacred scrolls.

The crew totaled 93 on this seven-year-old Canadian Northern Steamship Co. vessel, then under charter to the Uranium Line. Her destination was New York by way of Halifax, still some 1,200 miles over the western horizon.

Thursday, October 9, 1913, dawned wild and gray. Few had slept through the ship's rolling and pitching, much as the youthful skipper, Captain Francis J. D. Inch, tried to find an easy course.

In the limited first-class accommodations, Mrs. F. W. Alexander of New York, who had traveled aboard the *Volturno* before, was awake and troubled. The previous evening she had been talking to C. J. Pennington, junior wireless operator.

In a recurrent dream, he told her, he saw the ship ablaze as he frantically worked the Morse key, calling for help. He'd even written a letter to London requesting reassignment, he confided.

Dawn came and went, with no change in the leaden skies or the wind velocity. Until a few minutes before seven A.M., however, it was just another bad day on the North Atlantic. That was the opinion of Second Officer Lloyd, for one.

At exactly 6:55 by the bridge clock, he spotted yellowish smoke curling from the canvas of a forward hatch.

Lloyd knew how rapidly flames could spread in this wind—especially when the cargo included chemicals and liquor. Advising Captain Inch, he raced forward against the gale and combers which swept the decks. He was a big, powerful man and required but a few swings with an ax to crash a hole through the hatch planking.

He trained a fire hose into the opening and called for full pressure. But even as the salt water gushed into the black abyss he suspected the *Volturno* was doomed. The volume of smoke and the intensity of the heat were omen enough.

This standard shipboard procedure of fighting fire had unexpected results. An explosion in the hold scattered and spread the fire and widened the opening in the hatch. The Atlantic gale roared in, converting the forward portion of the *Volturno* into a blast furnace. Nor could the flood valves be turned on. The ship was too heavily loaded as it was.

The fire might be extinguished by allowing water to rush into the entire hold. But the ship would sink from the weight, Captain Inch reasoned. If only the sea were calm. . . .

News of the fire could no longer be hidden from the passengers. Inch sent crewmen to every cabin and steerage compartment to warn of the peril.

Pennington, the junior wireless operator, started tapping out the call which the *Titanic* had dramatized only the preceding year—SOS . . . SOS . . . save our souls!

Pennington could not believe it. He wondered whether he was asleep dreaming his terrible dream once more, or awake and recalling the dream with such realism that he believed the ship actually *was* ablaze.

Dramatically, almost within seconds, there was an answer—less than 80 miles away, the *Carmania* was plowing toward Ireland.

"Hold on, chaps," tapped the cheery message from the radio operator aboard the big Cunarder. "We're coming!"

Captain Barr ordered all off-duty stokers out of their bunks. They heaved coal into the glowing furnaces of the *Carmania* until the boilers' safety valves hissed and strained threateningly. Her speed, however, had been increased from a leisurely 15 to nearly 22 knots. She hurled herself at the mountainous seas.

On the *Volturno* there was great distress. The flames were spreading, fanned by the gale into incandescent intensity. They burned through the antenna stays on the foremast and consumed a stack of life rafts nested at the mast's base.

Officer Lloyd climbed up the shrouds. With tongues of flame licking about him, and half-blinded by smoke, he succeeded in refastening the antenna. When he was almost down again, a lurch of the ship, a blast of wind, snatched him and hurled him to the deck.

Dazed from the impact, he picked himself up and limped to the bridge.

Passengers, having donned their life belts, arrived on deck. They were badly frightened. They looked at the seas, saw and heard the all-engulfing fire forward, then returned to their cabins and compartments.

The rabbi was heard blowing the mournful notes of the shophar. He unfolded his sacred scrolls to beseech the Lord in a language strange to most people aboard before he returned below decks.

With the aerial lashed back in place, Pennington was receiving messages from other ships, the *Czar,* the *Rappahannock,* the *Kroonland,* the *Minneapolis,* the *Devonian,*

Lloyd spotted smoke curling out of a forward hatch, crashed a hole through the planking and trained a hose on the blaze.

the *Grosser Kurfuerst*. All were within a day's steaming or less of the *Volturno* and were coming as fast as their propellers would drive them.

Yet, although the fastest and nearest of this rescue fleet, the *Carmania,* should be alongside by noon, it began to appear that the *Volturno* could not survive even the next three or four hours. And if she did, Captain Inch wondered, could boats navigate the seething water between the two vessels?

He ordered one boat over the side, in command of the chief officer. It was lowered with a complement of two dozen passengers, mostly women, and several crewmen. Almost on the water, it capsized, spewing out its occupants.

None was saved, although the chief officer, the chief steward and several others were seen clambering into the boat after it righted. It vanished into the opaque curtains of rain.

"Prepare No. 6 boat for lowering!" ordered Captain Inch. Even after the first tragedy he believed that they had a better chance of survival on the sea than on the blazing ship.

Time ticked on. . . .

In America, it was a day like any other, even though fog screened the east coast and temporarily paralyzed shipping. The Athletics and the Giants had each won a game in the World Series and would play their third that afternoon at the Polo Grounds.

In Washington, D.C., President Wilson was planning to review a detachment of cavalry from Fort Myer, Virginia.

In Salisbury, Massachusetts, burglars, surprised when rifling a U.S. post office, shot and killed a policeman. And off Gloucester, the schooner *Quinnaponitt* drove hard onto the rocks.

Mrs. Vance Cheney, president of the International League of Right Living and Right Thinking, was preparing to discuss her favorite topics before a group of Portland, Maine, women.

The last dike standing in the way of the nearly completed Panama Canal was blown up. . . .

And at 11 A.M., lost in the churning waters of the Atlantic, an insignificant wooden toy known as Lifeboat No. 6 was launched from the burning *Volturno*.

Passengers on deck cheered as their erstwhile shipmates safely reached the water. Then it sailed out of sight—and into oblivion.

Lifeboat No. 7 was next. It, too, was launched successfully, in spite of 30-foot waves which smashed against its sides. It was, however, swept aft. Those on the ship watched helplessly as the stern of the *Volturno* smashed down from the crest of a wave and crushed the boat and everyone in it to nothingness.

"Lower no more boats!" shouted Captain Inch.

More than 100 people had now perished, A French newlywed couple clasped hands and jumped over the side together. The fumes were stifling; the young pair preferred death by drowning to suffocation.

One man rushed toward a lifeboat still secured to its falls. He had broken into a linen locker and stolen an officer's coat which he was wearing. A seaman knocked him to the deck, shocking him out of his panic.

Near the stern a group of equally terrified passengers—men and women, some with babies in their arms—were trying to steal a lifeboat in the hope of launching it and rowing away before the officers could notice. They, too, were restrained before they succeeded in what surely would have been their self-destruction.

Shortly before noon, the *Carmania* completed her dash

Even after the first lifeboat capsized, armed seamen had to restrain the panicked crowd from overloading the next ones.

and hove to alongside the *Volturno*. Captain Barr ordered Chief Officer Gardiner and his best oarsmen into the water. He knew the seas were too high for safe lifeboat work, but the sight of the smoke and flames from the *Volturno* told him there was not much more time left, if any.

For nearly two hours Gardiner fought to get beside the *Volturno,* but the seas hurled his little boat away each time he came near. He gave up and was hoisted back aboard the big *Carmania* which could make her own lee from the storm.

Captain Barr circled the *Volturno* as close as he dared, wondering if perhaps he could lay to alongside her for brief periods, allowing the passengers to jump. He looked at them, trussed in their life belts, huddled near the stern, staring at his liner. But he realized he would have to devise other means of rescue.

The fire was spreading amidships. The navigation bridge was abandoned. The radio shack was unbearably hot.

"Can't you string a breeches buoy?" Captain Inch signaled the *Carmania*.

Captain Barr knew that he could not. Yet, to demonstrate his good will, in spite of the futility of such an effort, he ordered one to be floated from the *Carmania*. The wind and sea quickly drifted it astern. There was no chance of it spanning the frothing channel between the two vessels.

At 3:30 P.M. the German freighter *Seydlitz* poked out of the murk. By blinker, semaphore and radio she added her voice to this desperate mid-ocean consultation.

Within the hour the *Grosser Kurfuerst* was on the scene, followed almost at once by the *Kroonland*.

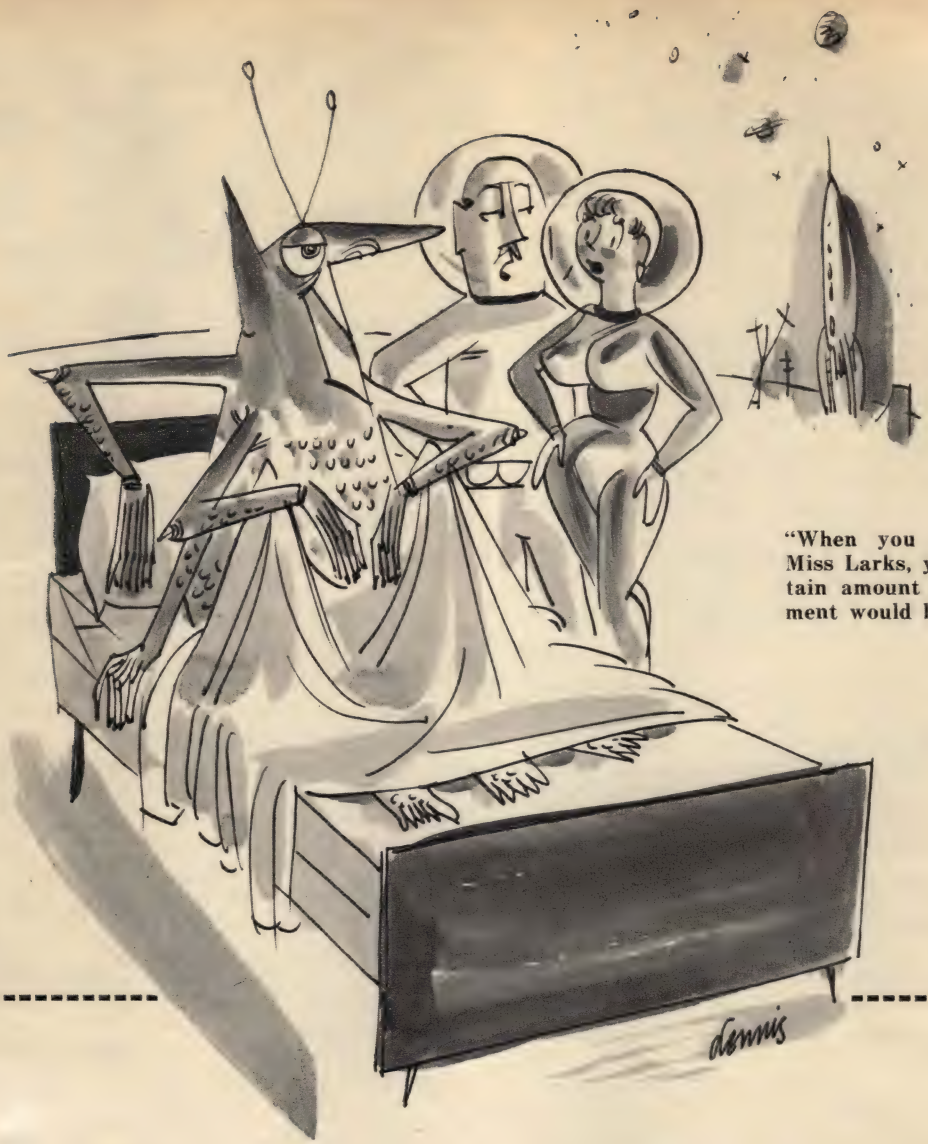
The *Seydlitz* put over a boat at 4:30, but was no more successful than the *Carmania*.

At the same time, Captain Inch, commanding his furiously blazing ship from a post aft on the boat deck, ordered a radio plea for a tanker. If only oil could be pumped onto the seas. . . .

The master's shoes, like those of all his officers and crew, were seared almost through by the scorching decks. His uniform was greasy and torn. He saw no hope of salvation, and a weary, numb resignation had taken possession of him.

Even the passengers were now calmer. Their hysteria, as expressed by the abortive attempt to commandeer and launch a lifeboat by themselves, had turned into a tired sense of hopelessness.

Those of the Jewish faith were gathered around their rabbi who was intoning his prayers. They had appropriated as their own a small segment of (*Continued on page* 82)



"When you joined this group, Miss Larks, you *knew* that a certain amount of scientific experiment would be expected of you."

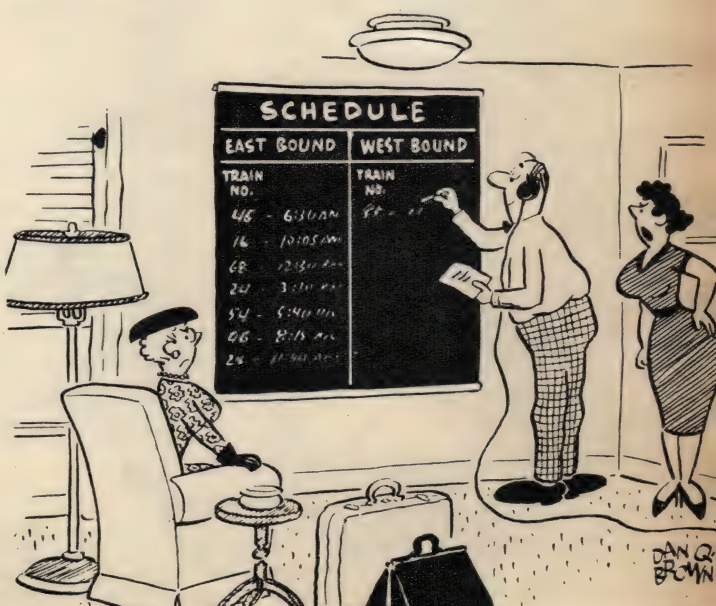
PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE

They did it, they do it and they'll probably be doing it a million years from now—but wherever they try to get away with it, there'll always be a cartoonist to catch them in the act.

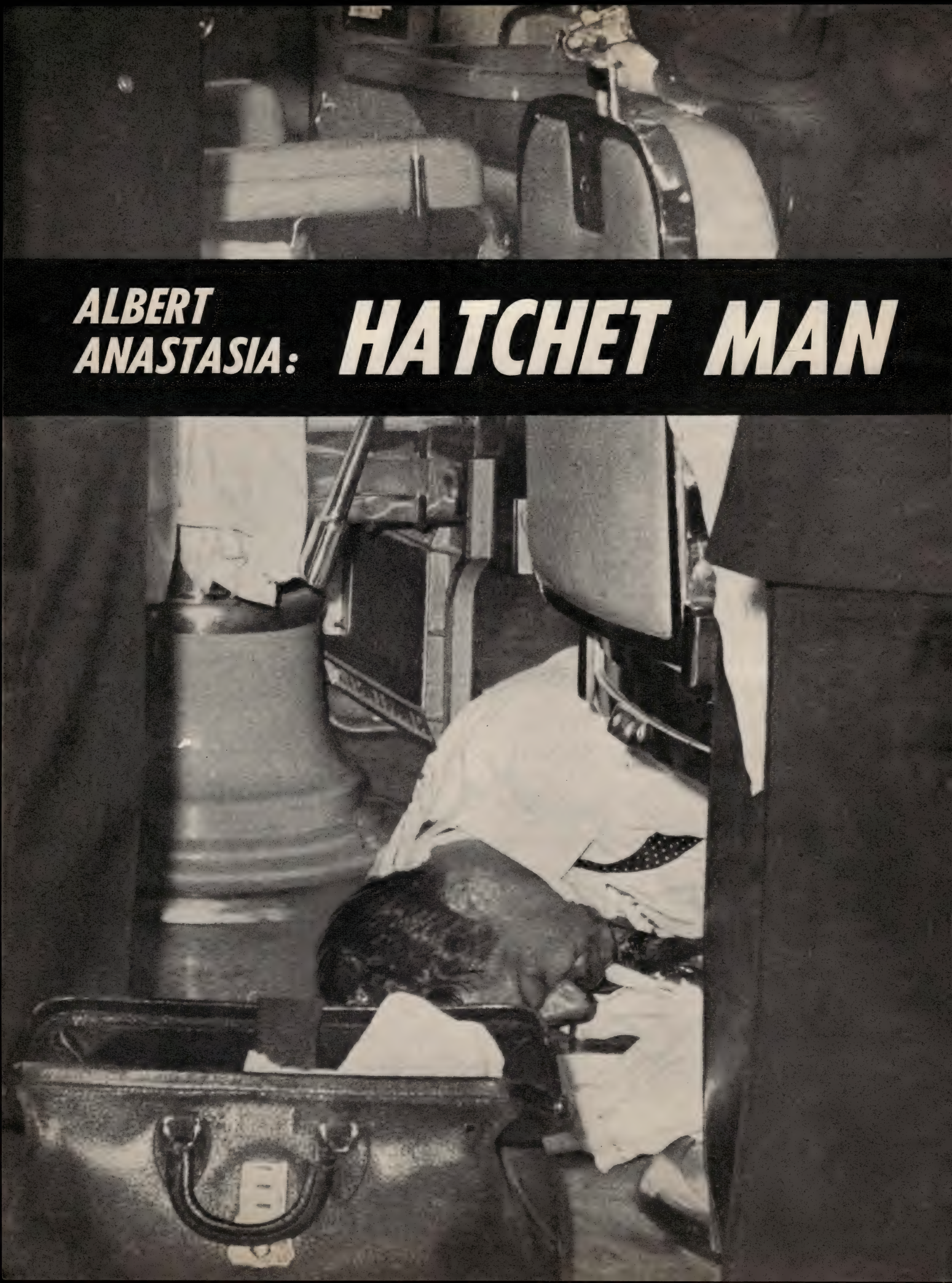
"Recognize anybody up there?"

"Honest, Eve, I never felt about anybody the way I feel about you!"

"Fred, can I borrow ten bucks?"



"Don't worry, Ralph, Mother is not going to miss her train."



ALBERT ANASTASIA: HATCHET MAN

As gangland's Lord High Executioner, he lived by one savage rule: "If you ain't got no witnesses, you ain't got no case."

OF THE MOB

by FRANK MULLADY
former N.Y.C. Detective
with WM. H. KOFOED

The first time I saw Albert Anastasia was in the King's County district attorney's office. He was being questioned in regard to murder on the Brooklyn waterfront. Well-dressed in a custom-tailored suit, made-to-measure shirt and appropriate accessories, he looked more like a Wall Street customer's man than the gaudy gangster the newspaper boys had pictured him.

He saw me looking at him and stared right back. He was like that. He could look you in the eye and hold it without blinking as long as you could. He was about five foot, ten inches in height and slightly on the bulky side, weighing perhaps 175 pounds. He had wavy dark-brown hair, brown eyes and a very ruddy complexion.

As I studied him, I saw that he was anything but the unobtrusive person he appeared to be at first sight. There was something about his eyes and lips and demeanor that made you feel you wouldn't want to be shut up alone with him in a dark room.

Anastasia turned away from me and said to his interrogator, "If you ain't got no witnesses, you ain't got no case." He was right, of course, and it was a credo he lived by as he went on to become the greatest witness-eliminator in history.

I recall specifically an incident which occurred when a local plasterer's union struck against a group of Brooklyn contractors. Anastasia provided goons as strikebreakers, and in a brawl they fractured the skull of Joseph Gonzo, a union delegate. Antonio Siciliano and Cesare Lattoro, business agents for the union, were present when Gonzo was beaten with a baseball bat, and in the investigation which followed they co-operated with the authorities.

Siciliano and Lattoro lived together at 1977 Bergen Street, Brooklyn. Fearing for their safety, they requested and received gun permits, and they were careful not to admit anyone they didn't recognize.

"Come and see me and we'll straighten everything out," Anastasia sent them word. They ignored the invitation, so Albert went on a scouting expedition. He hung around that Bergen Street address and observed that on a number of occasions a heavily-veiled female attired in black gained admittance by knocking on a basement window. Albert sent for three of his boys, Harry "Happy" Maione, Martin "Buggsy" Goldstein and Vito Gurino.

"I got a special job for you guys. Couple of union crums liable to make trouble for us. Gotta dust 'em off," Anastasia told them while furnishing names, address and other details.

"How we gonna get in there if they got barred windows and an iron gate?" Maione asked.

"It'll be easy, but we gotta wait for the right night. Just be on tap this week. I'll call you. Now pick up them things I told you about."

Anastasia kept his nightly vigil on Bergen Street, and when February 6th turned dank and foggy in the evening hours, he went to work. Frank Abbandando, a mobster with a penchant for baseball, was summoned.

"Frank, get a couple of rocks and knock out that street light," he ordered Abbandando. When the light, directly across from the Siciliano-Lattoro apartment, had been shattered and a deeper darkness had settled upon the scene, Albert said, "Now call Happy and tell him to hurry over here."

In due time Maione arrived in a stolen car which stopped at the corner. Gurino and Goldstein were with him.

Albert peered into the car. "You all ready, Hap?"

"Ready as I'll ever be," Maione growled.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Sentenced to burn in 1920, Anastasia flourished for 37 more murderous years, finally died in the chair—of a barbershop.

"O.K.," said Albert. "Do it quick. Remember they got guns. I'll see you tomorrow." He went back to his car, Abbandando tagging along, and drove away.

It was just nine o'clock when Happy Maione, attired in a black dress, veil, high heels and all, knocked on the basement window. When Lattoro opened a heavy iron gate in response to the knock, Maione drew a gun and pushed his way into the room, shouting for Goldstein and Gurino who awaited at the curb in the stolen car.

All three rushed into the house and shot both union officials dead. On the way out, in an excess of trigger-happiness, they riddled a mongrel dog whining in a corner.

Though this was a job in the traditional Anastasia pattern, he stormed at his goons when they reported the next day. "God damn it, you ain't supposed to do no extra shootin'! Look what the papers are sayin' about killin' that mutt! Ain't you got no sense?"

How does an Anastasia get that way? I wouldn't even attempt an answer, but others have listed a number of contributing factors: public indifference, incompetent public officials, politicians. It is a matter of record that, years later, upon being warned that crusading prosecutor Thomas Dewey might be elected governor of New York State, Anastasia said, "So what? Who cares who's governor? We've got the politicians."

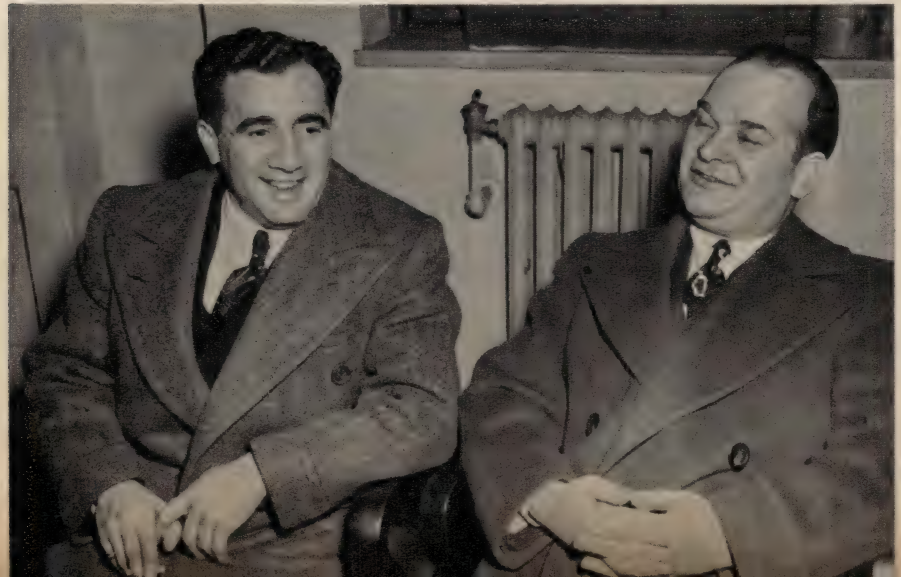
Born Umberto Anastasio at Beri, in Calabria, Italy, back in 1902, he arrived here by jumping ship in 1917. He went to live with George Terillo in Red Hook, Brooklyn. Terillo, an old friend of the family, took the youngster to work on Brooklyn's docks. There he called himself Anastasia, a minor change in spelling, but, no matter how you spelled it, the name came to mean assault, robbery, murder.

Albert Anastasia's first two brushes with the law concerned simple assault. The "simple" means "no weapon used." By 1920 he had become an accomplished robber, holding up small stores at gunpoint, yet even this must have seemed tame to the man later to be widely known as the Assassin.

THE MEN IN ALBERT'S LIFE

Maione and Abbandando in court which convicted them of killing a stoolpigeon. Reles (left) pinned rap on Goldstein (right), then "fell or jumped" from window.

No one was willing to testify against Luciano, but Uncle Sam booted him out.



Lepke Buchalter, sentenced to death, stalled off execution almost three years.

At this point he decided to raise his sights and do a job on his benefactor, George Terillo. Terillo was a front man for shylocks (moneylenders) on the docks, and often carried as much as $1,200 or $1,500 on his person.

Albert spoke to his accomplice, Joe Speranza, about it. "Let's take George," he said. "He's always good for a bundle."

"How do we do that? He knows us both."

"We shoot him in the back, so who cares who he knows?"

On May 16, 1920, Anastasia and Speranza waylaid Terillo and pumped eight bullets into his back. As he lay dead in the street, they went through his pockets but found only a gold watch and a few dollars in cash. Terillo had already delivered his collections.

Within 48 hours the culprits were in custody and had been identified by five witnesses. Anastasia and Speranza were convicted and sentenced to die. This looked like a quick end to a bad beginning, but unfortunately it didn't work out that way.

It took until December of 1921 for the Appeals Court to find that sentencing Judge Van Siclen had made a legal error. A new trial was ordered and was called in June, 1922. By that time four of those eyewitnesses had been shot to death and the fifth was in a state mental institution. Albert and his accomplice went free.

If you ain't got no witnesses . . .

Following his release from Sing Sing, Anastasia quickly rose from a two-bit hoodlum and muscleman to become boss of the racket-ridden Brooklyn waterfront. Nobody worked unless Albert nodded yes. After that nod the longshoreman had to shell out 50 cents a week to Albert. Doesn't sound like much, but with from 1,700 to 4,200 workers paying tithes, Albert did all right for himself. And anyone who balked at kicking back was soon visited by the boss.

"What's the matter? You don't want to work?" he challenged Paul Limoni, one guy who had refused the tribute.

"Sure I want to work, but I don't have to pay you or your collectors to do it." (*Continued on page* 46)

THE EXECUTIONER BOWS OUT

Tough Tony Anastasia wept as he hurried to death scene to identify his brother.

Police stood by as attendants hustled one-time executioner's body off to morgue.

Mr. A's funeral was attended by only a few, including his son (left) and widow.

BOOT HILL FOR NEVADA SAM BROWN

by RUSS LEADABRAND

A SLIGHT, graying man known as Mode pushed open the batwing doors of the C Street saloon and walked up to the bar. The room was packed with a Saturday night crowd, mostly Washoe miners trying to cut the rock dust from their throats after a week's mucking in the deep shafts of the Comstock.

"It's my last dollar," the small, seedy man said softly, and pushed the coin across the bar. "Might as well buy whiskey with it."

The barkeep took the dollar, mechanically swabbed the hardwood bar and set a bottle before the faded man who quickly poured himself a drink. The bartender pulled the bottle away.

Mode finished the drink, then whined a protest: "You'd think a last dollar would buy a man more comfort than that." The bartender ignored the comment, busied himself polishing glasses. None of the miners offered to buy the faded man another drink.

"That was a mighty little drink for a dollar," Mode continued to carp.

"Stop your damned mewling," boomed the next man at the bar. "You paid out your damned dollar, you got your drink. Now shut your mouth and get out."

It was rough talk, even for Virginia City, Nevada, late on a heavy-drinking evening. Miners glanced up to see who was talking. The clatter of glasses and the buzz of conversation died in the crowded room.

The slight man swung around, drew himself up. "Who the hell are you telling to be quiet?" he demanded.

"Oh, my God," moaned someone in the press around the bar. "That drifter Mode has called Sam Brown."

"Tell the little s.o.b. to run, if he's still got time," came another voice.

But Mode was rooted to the spot.

Miners drew back from the bar. Wiser heads in the crowd pushed out through the batwing doors.

Six-foot, red-bearded Sam Brown turned his yellowish eyes on the slight man. Brown smiled, a terrible reptilian grimace that exposed uneven rows of broken, yellowed teeth. His unkempt side whiskers were caught up in a knot under his chin. His clothes were greasy and matted with dirt and food particles. His hands were broad and blunt, with grimed and broken fingernails. A six gun with a worn handle swung loose in a holster at his hip. Spanish spurs chimed at his heels.

Sam Brown didn't speak. He never did in such a situation.

He stepped forward, fast for so large a man. His left arm grabbed Mode around the neck. His other hand flashed to his belt, came up with a broad-bladed bowie knife. The knife rose, gleamed in the dim saloon light, fell. Mode screamed shrilly. Miners fell back from the tangle.

Brown wrenched out the shining blade, plunged it into the frail chest again and again. Blood flushed out of the gaping wounds, drenching Brown, coating the floor with a crimson froth. The slight man hung like a rag doll in Brown's encircling stranglehold and the bearded giant kept slashing away with the knife. Those bar patrons who had not fled into C Street gagged at the spectacle.

Finally Brown dropped the hashed body, sheathed the stained knife and reached for a whiskey bottle with blood-gummed fingers. The big man drank deep, crossed the room, pulled the green baize cover off the top of a card table, rolled up in the heavy cloth and fell into a sodden sleep on the floor. Beside him the last life pumped out of Mode's mutilated body into the saloon's sawdust.

Sam Brown, who boasted he had to have "a man for breakfast every morning" was satiated.

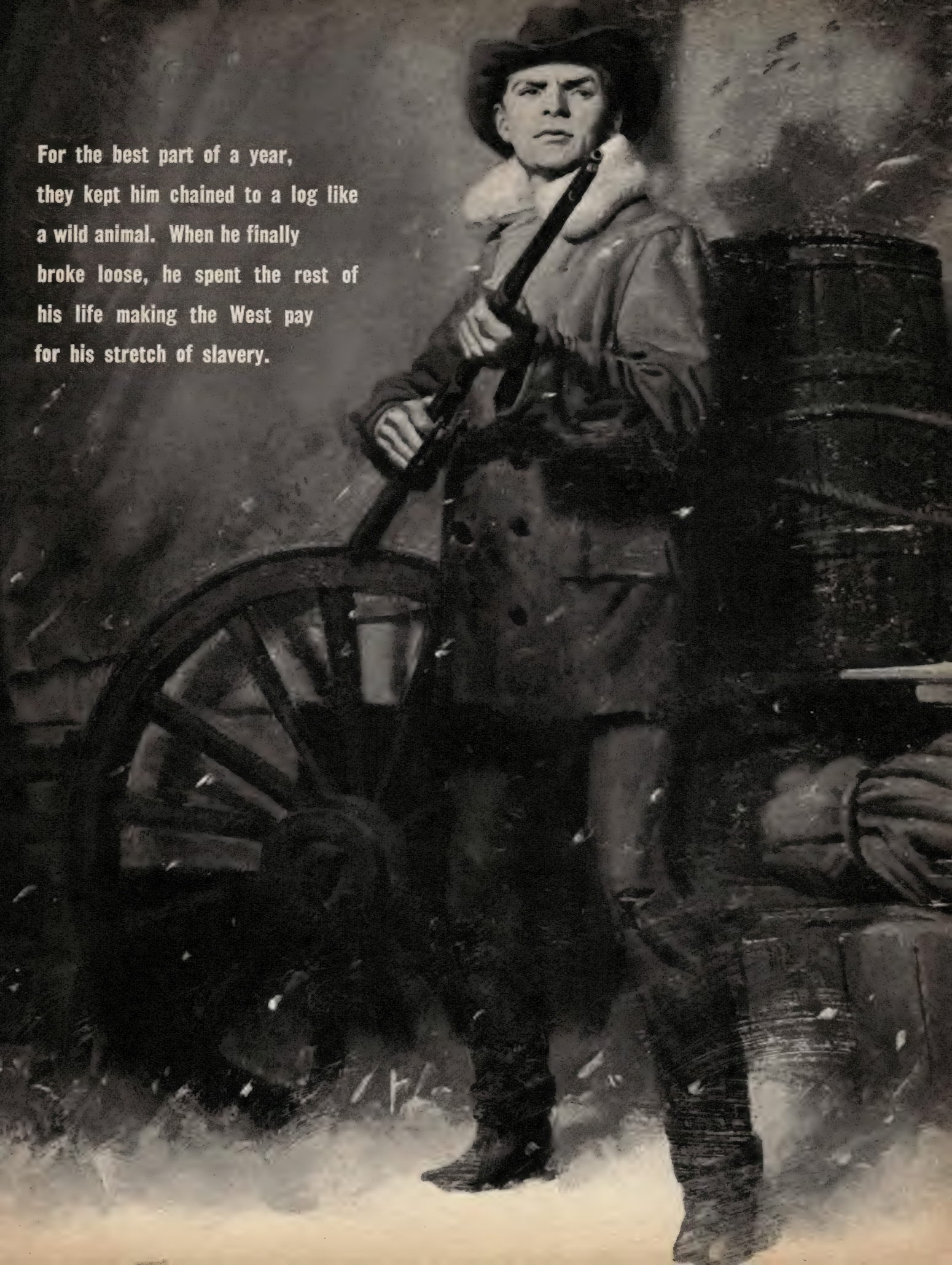
Each time it was the same. Brown struck without warning, without provocation. He seldom used the notched gun that swung at his hip. It was always the bowie knife, an instrument of sudden destruction.

It was the year 1860; law had not yet come to Virginia City. The ruffian "chiefs" held the richest mining camp in the West in thrall to terror.

And the worst of the lot was Fighting Sam Brown. In his terrible bass voice Brown had insisted that he'd filled his own cemetery before coming to (*Continued on page* 60)

"We'd like to take you with us, Sam," Snaeth jeered, "but your job's all done." He raised the rifle to his shoulder.

Art by Peter Baum



For the best part of a year, they kept him chained to a log like a wild animal. When he finally broke loose, he spent the rest of his life making the West pay for his stretch of slavery.

alerted, first thing they're supposed to do is sign over power of attorney, turn in their cars AND MAKE OUT A WILL . . . OCS will have its own hall of fame. . . .

YOU'VE GOT TO LOVE A EUROPEAN GIRL TO PIECES TO MARRY HER THESE DAYS. Army, Air Force have screws turned tighter than ever. If you leave out one carbon, make one spelling mistake, you've had it, and YOU MAY BE A GRANDFATHER BEFORE YOU GET THE GIRL OUT. But you can bet your boots any girl who gets by the Army physical, the personal history test and the local police exam is as straight as they come and plenty marriageable. . . .

LIFE ON A SUBMARINE IS MORE LIKE LIFE ON AN AIRPLANE THAN ON A SHIP. Destroyer, for example, has to buck the sea and weather turbulence, but a sub gets down beneath—that's where it's clear and steady . . . In any future war, each GI will carry a one-man combat surveillance radar set, WILL IDENTIFY ANYTHING THAT MOVES IN 6,000-FOOT RADIUS, guard against infiltration by enemy forces. . . .

THOSE CHESTFULS OF MEDALS ON SOVIET OFFICERS AREN'T ORDINARY FRUIT SALAD. Each one entitles him to bonus of $100 a month. . . .

MEN IN UNIFORM

MEN OUTDOORS

hovering overhead means the gulls have discovered bait—AND GAME FISH ALWAYS FOLLOW BAIT . . . SHOTGUN-ARROWS TAKING OVER AMONG SOME HUNTERS. The arrows carry a cylinder containing small missiles or shotgun pellets. Pellets outrun arrow, produce a shotgun-scatter effect. . . .

Battle tactic of boar is to charge hunter, use his weight to topple you. Hoofs and tusks can go to work and finish you when you're on the ground—if you haven't passed out yet FROM THE STINK. . . .

Big Florida thrill, incidentally, is hunting wild boar on foot with bow and arrow, instead of the old way—with rifle on horseback. But NOBODY'S GOOD ENOUGH YET TO VENTURE OUT WITH NO SIDEARMS. . . .

FAST-DRAW CONTESTS STARTING UP ACROSS THE COUNTRY. Guys usually don't shoot at each other, but at a target, and a timer picks the winner. MOST JOKERS DEVELOP A QUICK TRIGGER FINGER faster than they develop a quick draw, and this is mighty rough on the rear end and legs. . . .

MEXICAN OUTFITTERS GUARANTEE YOU A JAGUAR IF YOU HUNT WITH THEM—OR NO CHARGE. . . .

Some Hemingway advice on marlin-hunting: "Try to hunt them fast, but never rough. Secret is for the angler never to rest. Any time he rests, the fish is resting." . . .

A WAY TO TOTE FISH DURING THE HOT MONTHS: Remove gills, bleed fish well, then strip out insides, but don't nick flesh itself. Wash, get rid of excess water. Then rub inside and out with salt and pepper mixture, 1 tsp. pepper to 1 cup salt. Wrap fish loosely in paper or cloth and slip in basket. Drape wet piece of gunnysack over fish. You're on your way. . . .

MEN OUTDOORS

Mexicans turn up their noses at any hunting dog that hasn't been SCARRED FROM SNOUT TO TAIL by puma and bobcat claws. The more marks the more prestige dog has. . . .

SOAP, CUT INTO CUBES, IS YOUR BEST BAIT FOR CHANNEL CATFISH . . . Some archers cut off their broadheads, claim the flat front edge does more damage than a regular blade . . . In surf fishing, seabirds wheeling and

A MAN'S CAR

A new Japan-made small car will sell for $2,100 in this country. Watch for it: called

the "Toyopet" and will be small-car-ish, but pretty close to American styling, too. . . .

THOSE WILD WRAP-AROUND WINDSHIELDS WITH MORE GLASS THAN EVER BEFORE are nice to look at—but before you buy, think what one tire-flipped rock could do to you in repair bills. . . .

NEXT BIG CHANGE IN AMERICAN CARS will be flat floors—get this either by rear engines or front-wheel drive . . . A Florida outfit is cleaning up, selling exact duplicates of the sassy old 1901 Merry Oldsmobile—for $1,200. She'll get up to sensible 35 mph and use a gallon of gas for every 65 miles she goes. . . .

NEW FOR MEN

A way to use banana stalks for fireproofing . . . A special cart for lugging game animals to your car. . . .

A new "synthetic" worm, made from pork protein, that "bleeds" in the water to attract fish. . . .

AN ELECTRIC FINGER that dials phone for you if yours gets tired. . . .

FISH ALARM that lets angler doze off, wakes him when he's made a strike. . . .

AN EVENER that lets you cut sideburns even. . . .

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European socket wrenches for your foreign car (available in US for first time) . . . Special rake for retrieving golf balls from water hazards . . . FISH PHONE—you lower it into water and can actually hear fish coming . . .

A MAN'S WALLET

IT'S A SOUND RULE TO BE SUSPICIOUS OF ANY OLD GUN. Hammer guns may be made with solid steel, but they're still not too strong. Be careful of any old "double" with an odd breech mechanism. It was probably made in the '80s or '70s and might even blow up in your eyes. Trouble is, TOO MANY ARE SHORT IN THE CHAMBER, can't handle contemporary shells . . . It's a snap now to get a loan on a new swimming pool. Some seven out of 10 are paid for that way . . . STRAIGHT-THROUGH BUS TRAVEL IS THE BIG CHAMP ALWAYS in economy movement. Round trip N.Y. to Miami is only $63. . . .

NEW FOR MEN

A MAN'S WALLET

ONE CARD SHARK YOU'LL NEVER SPOT IS THE "FLASHER" because he doesn't rely on marked deck. But he can deal all high cards in bridge game to himself and partner by "flashing" cards, holding each one apart about 1/30th of an inch, for a fraction of a second. You can look all day and won't spot him. . . .

Pro bettors admit that the people who win heavy money at the track are the one time hunch players, out for the first time, who BET ON THE COLOR OF A JOCKEY'S SILKS. If they come back a second time they bug up with all the rest of the bums. . . .

IF YOU BET $10 on EVERY SPIN OF A ROULETTE WHEEL, you'd average out to a $54 loss at the end of an hour—with normal luck . . . BROWSING THROUGH AN OLD BOOKSTORE CAN NET YOU A FORTUNE IF YOU'RE LUCKY: Keep an eye out for copy of a New England Primer by Ben Franklin. There were 37,000 sold, but only one is known to exist. You're rich if you find one. Also, any manuscript by or letter from Will Shakespeare. . . .

ALBERT ANASTASIA: HATCHET MAN OF THE MOB

Continued from page 41

"Act nice, now, or you'll get something bad happen to you," Albert threatened.

"I'm not afraid of you," Limoni answered.

They were standing at the edge of the dock. Nonchalantly, Anastasia stooped and picked up a baling hook, then lashed out, striking Limoni across the face with it. As Limoni staggered, blood gushing from the raw wound, Albert rushed in, hurling him off the dock and into the water. Fortunately the man could swim and, with the help of several shocked spectators, was dragged to safety. Albert had walked away and was getting into his car. This was just a warning.

BECAUSE of the uncertainty of employment, moneylenders abound among the longshoremen. Anastasia moved right in on the shylocks without investing a dime. With the Limoni affair fresh in their minds, Albert had little trouble convincing those unlicensed bankers that he was entitled to 10 per cent of the exorbitant interest they collected weekly. Some decided to get away from the locality, but those who remained paid promptly.

Not only the lenders but the borrowers also were under the threatening shadow of Albert Anastasia. Take the case of Lawrence Rice. In the slack season he borrowed $100. After paying $10 a week for 36 weeks, Rice refused to pay any more. He got an urgent message to report to Anastasia's headquarters in the City Democratic Club at Clinton and Degraw Streets.

"You gotta pay up," Anastasia greeted him.

"I've already paid $10 a week for 36 weeks. I won't pay more. I can't," Rice pleaded.

"That $10 a week is interest. You still owe the hundred. You better pay up or you'll go overboard in a cement overcoat," Albert threatened.

Rice paid.

Now Anastasia extended his operations to include bookmakers. He called a meeting of them at the club and laid down the law. If they were going to operate in his territory and wanted to avoid a lot of bad luck such as being shot in the back, stabbed or beaten to a pulp, they had to turn over to Albert two per cent of the net take. To show you how this can add up, Harry Gross alone had a $30,000-a-week bookmaking operation on the docks—and along with the others he went to the City Democratic Club weekly to "see" Albert.

Lieutenant John Osnato took a squad of us to Albert's club one night and we went through the place from cellar to roof. Nothing was found.

Osnato challenged Anastasia: "You're not a citizen. How the hell do you come to be running a political club?"

"You guys make me sick," Anastasia said. "So I ain't a citizen, but I can be *civil*-minded, can't I? There ain't no law against that, is there?"

Anastasia's iron rule over the mob-infested docks attracted the attention of Charles Luciano, the notorious Charley Lucky. Through him Anastasia made a lot of new gangland connections. Lucky was a protégé of Iznazio Saietta, a maniacal character known as Lupo the Wolf. High in Mafia councils, the Wolf ruled a mob that hustled dope and ran an Italian lottery while extorting money under threats of bombs or murder. Charley Lucky began as a pineapple heaver (bomb thrower) for Lupo.

But the Wolf got too ambitious and went into competition with the federal government by making his own currency, for which the government sent him to Atlanta Penitentiary for 30 years. A wave of killings ensued in the struggle for Lupo's throne. Lucky backed Giuseppe Masseria, who had narrowed the field to himself and Umberto Valenti, a bootlegger. Then Masseria was ambushed and shot, but escaped with minor damage. After a conference had been arranged to bring Masseria and Valenti together in an East Side café, Lucky sent for Anastasia.

"AL, I got a job for you. Guy named Valenti is giving Joe Masseria a lot of trouble. I want you to fix him up."

"Who's Valenti? How am I gonna know him?"

"I'll attend to that. Just make sure it's a clean job."

"Point him out to me and I'll evaporate him myself," Albert replied. That "evaporate" became his favorite term for a killing, though occasionally he would say, "hit him in the head," which meant the same thing.

A week later, as Valenti emerged from a taxicab on his way to the café conference, Anastasia blew off the top of his head with a shotgun. This was the Assassin's first out-of-Brooklyn killing, and the fact that he did it with his own hand made a very favorable impression on the rackets bosses everywhere, and even the hired guns were impressed.

Competition removed, Masseria took over the Lupo mob and became known as Joe the Boss. He appointed deputies such as Frank Uale, alias Frankie Yale, who handled bookmakers; August Carfano, alias Little Augie Pisano, who bossed the bootleggers, and Charley Lucky, whose specialty was narcotics, while Masseria himself ran the Italian policy game.

ABOUT that time Anastasia and others began infiltrating the clothing industry and trucking firms. The large oil companies were struck by the truckers. For a week nothing moved, then Albert's strikebreakers arrived with club-carrying goons to protect them. As violence increased, more police were assigned, and Detective Clarence Gilroy and I got into the act.

We were at Avenue U and Flatbush Avenue when the Assassin rolled by in his Cadillac.

"That was Anastasia's car," Gilroy said. "If he comes back, we'll see what plays."

The car did return and we halted it.

"What are you doing down here?" Gilroy asked.

On occasion, when talking to cops, Anastasia could sound as innocent as a babe in a bassinet. "I ain't makin' no crimes," he said. "I ain't going to start no trouble."

"That's just fine," Clarence applauded him, "but get out of the car anyway. We want to look you over."

"Look, Mr. Gilroy, I got about 200 of my boys down here protectin' the fellows who are working. Don't search me here. Follow me up the block, hey?"

Gilroy was unimpressed. "Out!" he boomed, gesturing with his thumb.

Albert climbed out and damned near got skulled as Clarence scaled the car's front seat over his head. A hulking giant of a man, Clarence Gilroy was one of the city's most competent detectives and a wonderful guy for anybody but a hoodlum. He literally tore that Cadillac apart but found nothing amiss, not even a gun or a blackjack in the glove compartment. Meanwhile, Anastasia stood with his arms in the air while I searched his person. He had $6,000 in bills on him, but no weapons.

Clarence turned away from the car and looked at Albert. "O.K. On your way," he said. "But if we see you down here again we'll book you."

"Book me for what?" Albert rasped as he

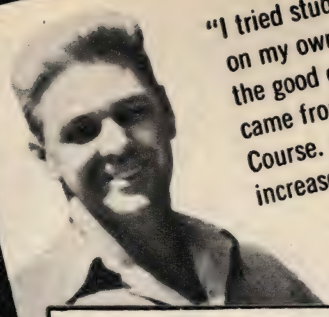
(*Continued on page* 48)

WHITE KING OF THE CHINA COAST

If they ever run Conrad Grimes to earth, you can bet he'll be found in the arms of a lush redhead called "Singapore Kate." For nothing—not even prison walls—could keep the wild man of China from his mistress, the woman who ran the Far East's plushest bordello. For the full story of the man who made fools of every police force from Shanghai to Nagasaki, see the December issue of STAG.

ARE YOU TOO OLD TO LEARN?

not at all, scientists say



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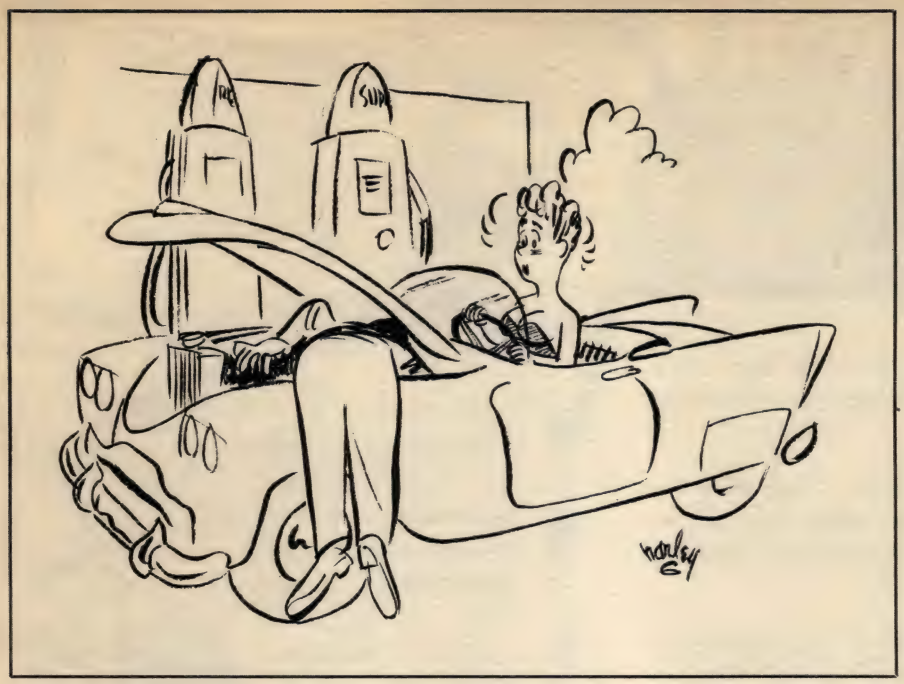

(*Continued from page* 46)

adjusted his coat with a dandy's elegance.

"For vagrancy," I put in.

"With six grand and a Cadillac, I'm a bum?"

"You are a bum," I assured him.

Pieced together, episodes like this give even a cop a pretty well-rounded portrait of a guy. The interesting thing here was to observe how sensitive the Assassin was to derision or even the possibility of derision. Yet he had to run that strike, and sure enough he again ran afoul of Gilroy and in he went.

Of course the charge of vagrancy could never be made to stick. What Gilroy wanted to accomplish was not only to pull Albert down a peg by getting him onto the police line-up platform, but to have the lawmen get another good look at this growing menace that was Albert Anastasia.

STANDING under the lights, Albert took a verbal belting from several high officials, and he rasped right back in that peculiar hoarse voice that once heard was never forgotten. His attitude annoyed hard-bitten Police Commissioner Valentine, who took a hand in the questioning.

"When did you begin dealing in narcotics?" Valentine asked.

"Never did," the Assassin replied.

"What about this story that you put up $50,000 to finance shipments of heroin from France?"

"Some joker wrote that in the paper. You ought to stop tailing me and put a couple of men on this joker. He must be hitting the pipe to write that stuff. I got nothing to do with dope."

"Got anything to do with murder?" Valentine shot back.

"Go ahead, blame everything on me. Except I'm lucky enough to be in the hospital when that crazy guy shoots at President Roosevelt, somebody'd claim I put him up to it."

We had to let him go, and Anastasia walked out as cocky as ever. He may have frustrated the cops, but Joe the Boss got after him and others for mixing into such businesses as trucking and the garment trades. Joe wanted to stick to narcotics, the lottery, bootlegging and the like, with which he was familiar. The younger faction, including Charley Lucky, wanted an all-out drive on labor and management.

Only Frankie Yale, of the younger element, sided with Joe the Boss. A week later Yale was driving along near the docks in Brooklyn when two men pulled up alongside in another car and, as nonchalantly as if they were using insecticide, sprayed him with machine-gun bullets.

As Anastasia had complained so bitterly about being blamed for everything, I hesitate to state unequivocally that he was the machine-gunner, but nobody thinks it was Snow White and the seven midgets. Joe the Boss had his own ideas and called a meeting about Yale's demise.

"When I find out who did this, somebody's going to get bumped," he declared. His extremely quizzical attitude toward Albert Anastasia caused the latter to do some thinking.

"Charley," he told Lucky, "I think we need a new boss. Who the hell needs these handle-bar guys to run things, anyway?"

In case you don't know, the term "handle-bar guys" is a Mafia expression for the older members with their down-curving mustaches.

Lucky advised caution. "Let's not get too rough now, Al. You know Joe does a good job. He'll forget this thing in a week."

"I won't forget the way he kept looking at me," the Assassin snarled. "Next time you take him to Scarpato's at Coney Island, you tip me."

"Nothing doing," Lucky said.

Anastasia stared hard at him. "You mean you're against *me*?"

While there is ample evidence that Charley Lucky rarely ran away from trouble, there is even more evidence that he got an uneasy feeling whenever Anastasia stared and croaked in that hoarse voice.

"O.K., Al. I guess you're right. We'll be there next Friday night."

True to his word, Lucky took Joe the Boss to Scarpato's and Albert Anastasia was waiting—along with an escape-car driver, Joseph Barberi, and a lookout, Angelo Simonelli. After he had given his order to the waiter, Lucky excused himself on the pretext of having to go to the men's room. A moment later, from a nearby window, Anastasia pumped shotgun shells into Joe the Boss until his body sprawled dead on the floor. You can imagine how surprised Charley Lucky was upon returning from the bippo.

Within two months Barberi and Simonelli, who knew every detail of the Boss's murder, were found shot to death near the Gowanus Canal section of Brooklyn.

If you ain't got no witnesses . . .

IN 1933, with Prohibition a dying institution, the mobs called a convention at Atlantic City. There were Little Augie, Charley Lucky, Louis Buchalter, from New York, Johnny Torrio from Chicago, the Fischettis from Detroit, Buggsy Siegel from California and Willie Moretti from New Jersey. Dozens of others attended this conclave, which lasted for three days.

It was there that the National Crime Syndicate was formed, territories assigned, and Albert Anastasia, on the basis of his record, was appointed Lord High Executioner. Albert went on a monthly retainer, with the understanding that he could be summoned at any time, anywhere. In addition, guarantees of his sovereignty over the Brooklyn rackets were confirmed. He had come a long way since his Red Hook days.

When the first call came for Albert to take the show on the road, he didn't disappoint his employers. In fact, he accidentally gave them two corpses for the price of one. Summoned to Detroit, the Assassin was to dispose of a guy named Harry Millman. As this was his first contract for the new National Crime Syndicate, Albert proposed something special.

"I'll evaporate this guy with a bomb," he said.

"How you do it is your business, but do it in a hurry," was the answer.

"You sent for *me*," Anastasia snapped. "Don't tell me to hurry. I do it when I'm ready."

The Assassin studied Millman's movements for a few days and when the opportunity afforded itself he attached a bomb under the hood of Millman's car, set to go off with the self-starter. That was the day Millman got a toothache and sent Bill Holmes to fetch his car. Holmes was blown to bits.

"What lousy luck!" the Assassin moaned. "This is costing me time and money. Now I gotta have a getaway car and a driver." Two days later he invaded a crowded restaurant at the dinner hour to blast Millman out of existence with his favorite weapon, a sawed-off shotgun.

Nobody in Detroit could or would identify him. He wasn't even picked up for questioning.

Back in Brooklyn and realizing that he was going to be a very busy man and would need a bigger staff, Albert went to a Brownsville restaurant operated by Louis Capone where he knew he could find recruits. This place was a hangout for such assorted thugs as Homicide Harry Strauss, Buggsy Goldstein, Happy Maione, Vito "Chicken Head" Gurino, Abe "Kid Twist" Reles, Frank "The Dasher"

(*Continued on page* 50)

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(*Continued from page* 48)

Abbandando and other young hoods then imposing a reign of extortion terror on that locality—certainly as amazing a collection of subhumans as ever was seen outside of a horror movie. Assassin Albert enrolled this gang under his banner and thereafter referred to them as "my Brooklyn troop." Now he could dispatch hired guns anywhere on a moment's notice.

IN spite of his new importance in the country-wide setup, Albert did not neglect affairs on the waterfront, where all of his rackets were flourishing. He knew, however, that he could maintain his position only so long as no one dared defy his authority and make it stick—which was just too bad for a guy named Irving Feinstein.

A former pugilist with a badly battered nose, Puggy Feinstein went into business as a moneylender along Piers 15 and 16 at Montague Street. He was doing all right until Vince Mangano, one of Anastasia's collectors, came aong.

"How do you come to operate here without an O.K.?"

"Who gives the O.K. and who needs it?" the belligerent Puggy demanded.

"Albert A. is the boss and he gives the O.K.," Mangano said.

"Get lost before I belt you," was the way Puggy signed off.

This was in mid-August and when Albert got the news he felt that it was important enough to cut short his stay at the Saratoga race track in upstate New York, and return to Brooklyn. He was in a black mood when he accosted Feinstein.

"Didn't Vince tell you to knock it off?" he asked.

"Who the hell are you?"

"I am Albert A. and I think you know it," the aroused Assassin rasped.

"Well, Albert, you got nothing to do with me."

"You are kidding? Yes?"

"No, I ain't kidding. I'm staying here."

Anastasia sent for Homicide Harry Strauss and Abe Reles. "Get some of the boys and hit this Puggy in the head," he ordered.

"What is his other name?" Strauss asked.

"I don't know, but he ain't hard to find. He's a small guy they call Puggy, and he comes from Borough Park."

"What kind of job do you want?"

"Use a rope for a change, then burn him. I want this contract handled right away, because this guy talked fresh to me," the Assassin rasped. His ego was showing again.

When several days had passed without any result, Anastasia again sent for Strauss. He wanted to know what was holding things up.

They had had no luck, said Strauss, because they didn't know the chump's last name. So Albert made a few telephone calls and at length discovered that Puggy was being financed by Tiny Benson, an East New York taxicab driver turned shylock.

"YOU get this Puggy to look for you on the Corner," Anastasia sent word to Benson. "And make sure you are not there when he looks." The Corner meant a candy store at Saratoga and Livonia Avenues, run by Midnight Rose Gold. The "Midnight" tag had been hung on this illiterate old dame because of the number of times she had bailed hoods out of police stations in the dead of night. Inside or in front of that store was the Corner to the mob.

Labor Day evening found Strauss, Reles and Goldstein in front of the place. Nearby sat Anthony "Duke" Maffetore in his car. Another car containing three young men pulled up, and one of the young men got out to look around. He spoke to Strauss. "Anybody know where I can find Tiny Benson?"

"Haven't seen him lately. Who will we say was askin' for him, if he comes by later?"

"Just say Puggy from Borough Park," and the fellow started back toward his friends' car.

Strauss quickly told Reles, "This is Albert's contract." So Goldstein was sent to stall the guy while Strauss and Reles put their heads together.

After further friendly overtures, they got Puggy to accompany Goldstein in Maffetore's car, supposedly to go hunting Benson. After an hour Goldstein was to bring the victim to 649 East 91st Street where Reles lived on the ground floor of a two-family structure.

Strauss told Reles, "I better rush over to Albert's to get an O.K. on takin' this guy from the Corner." Meaning the location might be suspect if a fellow disappeared from there and was later found murdered.

Reles said, "Well, scram, then," and went on home, where he asked Sophie Karsh, his mother-in-law, to get him the ice pick and a length of clothesline. That accomplished, the old lady was ordered to bed.

Strauss was back in 40 minutes with the word. "Albert says it's O.K." Then his glance caught the ice pick and he added, "I won't need that tonight. You know Albert wants this fellow to get the rope and then burn."

"Yeah, I know. But it's somethin' extra, just in case," said Reles, so Strauss took it and sat behind the door leading to the apartment. Reles, the rope behind him, slouched in a chair near the radio. Shortly Goldstein arrived to find out what was what. "Bring the bum in," Strauss told him. These guys really had ice water in their veins.

A moment later they could hear Goldstein's and Puggy's steps on the stairs and Goldstein's reassurances that he had found Benson.

When Puggy hesitated in the doorway, Goldstein shoved him into the dimly-lit living room where he was immediately set upon by Strauss, who hooked a gorillalike arm around Puggy's neck to draw his head back. Reles quickly slipped the rope over the fighting Feinstein's head, then looped it around his knees. You could almost feel the presence of Albert A. hovering over the scene, instructing the boys.

At that point Strauss let out a half-repressed yell. "Get him! He's biting off my thumb!"

Goldstein, who had been watching, jumped in to deliver several well-directed kicks into the struggling man's groin, while all three slowly forced him onto a couch. There they finally succeeded in trussing him up in such fashion that every time he moved he hastened his own death by strangulation. Pretty soon Puggy wasn't moving at all.

Puggy Feinstein's body was carried out a side door to Maffetore's car. The latter and Goldstein headed for the Canarsie dumps,

(*Continued on page* 52)

MALE'S MEMORABLE ISSUE

WILD CASTAWAYS OF THE S.S. ANABASIS . . . There'd never been a pack of survivors to match this one: a fat man with a broken back, a religious crank, a stockbroker with a head problem, two mystery men and an athletic blonde girl who couldn't stand wet clothing and was driving them *all* crazy. MALE'S BOOK-LENGTH SPECIAL.

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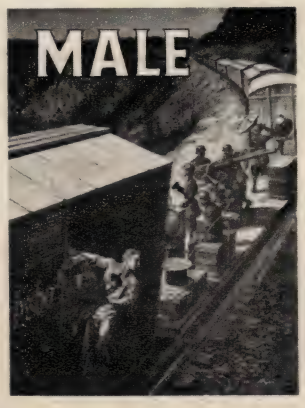

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(*Continued from page 50*)

first stopping to buy a five-gallon can of gasoline. They rolled the body out at Fillmore Avenue and East 52nd Street. After the gas was poured over it, matches were tossed on the corpse. Just part of the head and feet remained after the fire. I was on the scene of Puggy's funeral pyre and know that identification was made from a dental chart.

A couple of years later when crusading Prosecutor Thomas E. Dewey began hacking away at the hoodlum empire, Anastasia took inventory and recalled that the only one of his men not implicated in the Feinstein murder, yet who knew all about it, was Vince Mangano, whose beef had brought the boss back from Saratoga. To think was to act with Albert, and before the week was out Mangano's body was found shot to death in some tall weeds near Jamaica inlet.

If you ain't got no witnesses . . .

IT wasn't that Albert had any hard feelings against witnesses. But they got in the way. They were a threat. And even if you liked them personally, they had to be eliminated.

Take the case of Henry "Knockout" Halpern, for example. A punch-drunk former boxer, he drifted into menial tasks for Anastasia. He never was given anything important to do because whatever Halpern got into always wound up in a brawl. He would suddenly "hear the bell" and somebody got belted. His antics seemed to amuse the Assassin. Halpern, unknown to Anastasia, got himself arrested for assault. Put on probation, he had to report weekly at the Criminal Courts Building.

He was seen coming out of this edifice of law and order, and the matter was duly reported to Albert A. Still afflicted with the Dewey jitters, the Assassin recalled that Halpern had unwittingly walked into a garage on Eastern Parkway while the Whitey Rudnick ice-pick murder was under way, so what was he to think but that the Dewey staff was at work on one of his boys?

The next time Halpern left the probation office and stepped into State Street, a car whizzed by and the punch-drunk battler heard his last bell as he was counted out by a shotgun blast.

The location was close to Brooklyn Headquarters and I was one of the first on the scene. Having previously arrested Halpern, I recognized the body and crossed into Livingston Street, seeking a telephone to impart that information to our office. I walked into a restaurant and there sat Albert Anastasia presiding over a full dinner table, surrounded by a coterie of bums.

"One of your mob just got his over on State Street," I told him.

"I been here three hours."

"Then it's time to get out into the air. Take your hat and coat. Come over and see Halpern; he was one of your henchmen."

Albert turned puzzled eyes to the guy next to him. "What's a henchman?" he asked. The guy shook his head.

Subjected to 20 hours of interrogation, Anastasia complained bitterly that he never would have been bothered if I hadn't stumbled on him accidentally in the restaurant. He professed amazement that anybody would connect him with the murder of "poor Knockout."

Before releasing him, Chief Inspector Gallagher blistered his ears with a tirade such as he rarely indulged in, concluding with the prediction, "And mark my word, you'll wind up in the chair!"

"I ain't going to wind up in no chair, because I ain't doin' nothin'," the Assassin replied.

He "wasn't doin' nothin'." Well, I suppose even murder ceases to be a thing that people wonder at when it is repeated endlessly. There isn't space enough here to log the Assassin's complete score in homicide. There isn't even enough space to detail the Brooklyn cases on which I worked, like the tragic end of Peter Panto, ambitious union rank-and-filer who challenged Anastasia's power and wound up in a grave of quicklime; or of Charles "Vannie" Higgins, the bootlegger who was slaughtered in front of his own family; or of Rocco Morgani or Morris Diamond and many another—shot, knifed, bludgeoned, choked, burned—a long roll call of brutality and horror.

And of course that's without even mentioning the out-of-town cases for the Syndicate. Buggsy Siegel got his while he dozed in Virginia Hill's California mansion. Willie Moretti was cut down in a New Jersey restaurant. Walter Sage had a slot machine tied to his neck before being dumped in an upstate New York lake. Anthony Romeo was slashed to ribbons and thrown into the Delaware River. And so on, almost ad infinitum—all traceable to the Assassin.

BUT Albert's time finally ran out last October, and Chief Gallagher's prediction came true. Anastasia did die in the chair—a barber's chair.

Why he got it and who were the perpetrators are still shrouded in mystery, but insiders insist that Albert's efforts to muscle in on big-time gambling in Cuba lowered the boom. Anyway, last October 25th he left his $70,000 Fort Lee, New Jersey, mansion and drove to midtown Manhattan. After parking his car, he arrived at the Hotel Park Sheraton's barber shop. He was greeted by proprietor Arthur Grasso, "Good morning, Mr. A. Take chair number four."

Anastasia hung up his hat and coat, and walked with that peculiar rolling gait of his to the designated chair.

"Gimme a haircut," he told Joseph Bocchini, and closed his eyes.

There is a time to live and a time to die, and though he didn't know it, the Assassin's life was drawing to a close. Two masked men, each carrying two guns, entered the shop through the front door.

"If you don't want your head blown off, keep your mouth shut," one of them warned Grasso.

The shop is only 35 feet long by 28 wide, so it required only seconds for those masked men to get directly behind Anastasia. Both seemed to fire at once. Albert leaped from the chair and stumbled forward. Another double blast threw him up against the mirrored wall, and, with one arm flailing the air, apparently seeking support, Albert Anastasia slid slowly to the floor. Five of the ten shots fired had hit him.

The Lord High Executioner had been executed.

The two men walked out and haven't been seen since. ◆◆◆

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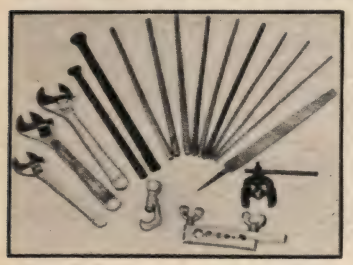

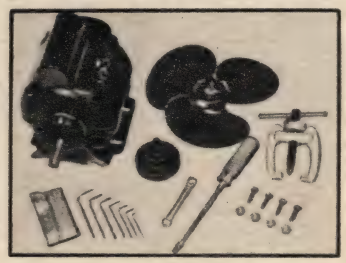

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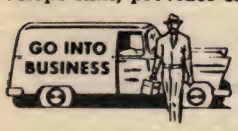

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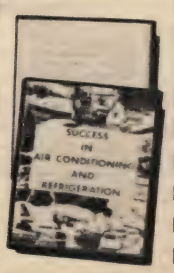

$60,000,000 HOT DIAMOND SWINDLE

Continued from page 19

up a special corps of private investigators.

"We must seal off this diamond smuggling at its source," announced Sir Percy.

Obviously, diamond producers such as the powerful De Beers Consolidated Mines and Diamond Corporation can't afford to have marauders and smugglers flood the world with the gewgaws. Without rigid protection, particularly in the prohibited desert area, the price tag on diamonds could fall below that of cut glass.

Certainly the diamond-studded desert, mines and diggings of Africa are among the most heavily guarded sectors in the world; more so, apparently, than our atomic plants. From the Atlantic approach, PT-type boats and other light naval craft keep vigil over the coasts night and day. From the air, three squadrons of dune-hopping aircraft roam the territory constantly, always in radio communication with camel-borne police. These camel units move silently along the gullies between dunes, using as outposts the old stone forts built by the Germans in the 19th century.

Along the shores of Alexander Bay, near the alluvial diamond-bearing diggings, trained dogs accompany police on day and night patrols. The entire area is encircled by three high barbed-wire fences. Visitors have to pass through three check posts, strip naked and have their clothing searched while their bodies are X-rayed for purloined stones.

Local headquarters of the famous Diamond Detective Department of the South African police is at Luderitz, where everyone applying for a permit to the Prohibited Area is considered a potential thief. You can't even go for a picnic outside the city or visit the nearby penguin and seal islands without a permit.

NATIVE workers are now kept in compounds for three-year periods, not permitted in the outside world until their term is up. Then, before they leave, they are not only searched but held in special detention rooms for several days. The idea is to let them digest whatever they have eaten—including diamonds. In the old days, as the mine guards grew more adept at searching topknots, beards, between toes, inside earholes and all the other natural orifices of the body, the natives grew equally skillful at thinking up new ways to hide the diamonds. One photograph hanging in the De Beers boardroom at Kimberley shows an elderly native who swallowed 21 diamonds—a total of 348 carats—at one time. Nowadays, X-ray searching invariably spots the hidden gems.

Still, the poachers, filchers and smugglers keep trying. Hundreds are nabbed but nobody knows how many get away with a scintillating prize. Devious tricks and strategies are being invented almost daily but thievery has been going on ever since diamonds were discovered in South Africa in 1867, so the Detective Department has learned to anticipate almost every fresh gimmick. In the 1870s, when the thievery was first known as IDB (Illicit Diamond Buying)—because traders who bought the stolen stuff were considered the real offenders—it was so prevalent that trying to stop it was like trying to hold back Victoria Falls.

THERE was a time when an IDB would take some half-starved dogs into Kimberley and feed them pieces of meat containing contraband diamonds. Then the animals, taken safely out of town, would be shot, the gems extracted from their bodies. Diamonds would be hidden in cavities of smoking pipes, hollowed-out heels of shoes, holes carved in thick buttons.

Today, would-be raiders arrive in a city like Port Nolloth or Luderitz posing as respectable businessmen. Registering at a hotel, they hang around town for a few weeks conducting some kind of legitimate trade. Then one night they dodge the police, slip out of town and walk miles down the coast where the camel patrols are apt to be less vigilant. Some of the poachers take along well-paid Hottentot guides to show them where the diamonds are plentiful.

Others, like Heuss and Fitch, try their invasion from the sea. But police know that any boat that's gone overnight is not on honest business, so they're waiting at the dock when the boat returns. One favorite technique of the modern poacher or mine thief is to wrap his loot in an unsinkable cork package and float it on the water until an accomplice in a boat or plane arrives at the rendezvous. Several of these floating fortunes have been snatched up by the Detective Department in the past year.

Like vultures, the shifty IDBs wait in the sidewalk cafés of Luderitz and other cities for poachers to return, offering them half the market price for their booty. Some raiders avoid the chiseling IDBs by smuggling their diamonds directly to Amsterdam or Brussels where prices for black-market stones are much higher.

Sooner or later, it seems that almost everyone in South Africa eventually falls for the temptation to pocket some of those jewels himself. Over a glass of beer at Kapp's Hotel in Luderitz, they spin the yarn about a police sergeant named Fred Stauch. An easygoing fellow, Fred had generously let off a burly native after a stabbing affray. One night, to repay the kindness, the native revealed to Fred the location of a secret diamond deposit, just within the Kaoko Veld, on the northern border of the prohibited area. At first it sounded like a fantastic tale and the sergeant wouldn't believe it.

"Baas, 'n mooi klip—Boss, nice stone," the native insisted, until Fred agreed to go along on a trip to the desert. But the sergeant had so little faith in the story that he didn't take any tools along. His main equipment was a bottle of Scotch.

Then, much to his astonishment, they did come upon a rich deposit. Drinking all the Scotch, Fred filled the empty bottle with diamonds. Returning to Luderitz, he sold the gems to an IDB and promptly resigned from the police force. Then he organized a full-scale expedition back to the source of his wealth, but his native friend had vanished with his share, and Fred could never find the place again. He had been too befuddled by Scotch the first time to recall the precise route.

Strangers who come to South Africa to poach on the Diamond Coast have more than just police patrols and government detectives to contend with. Nature has set up a seemingly impregnable fortress to safeguard its precious commodity. The desert "thirst-land" is often swept by dense sandstorms of such fierceness that surfaces of vehicles have been scoured clean of enamel as if deliberately sandpapered.

Throw an empty bottle on the ground and soon the ceaseless whirling of the sand will not only turn it opaque but cut it in two. If a man collapsed from exhaustion and died in the desert, the sand would pick his bones clean of whatever flesh was missed by the vultures. Every bone of his skeleton would be polished smooth and white. No wonder the desert is called Skeleton Coast.

Many a wanderer has lost his life in the hopeless never-ending flatlands once the sun has disappeared. Battling his way in a sandstorm, his only hope for survival may be to meet up with the little Bushmen, a primitive tribe which lives off lizards and ant larvae. But these tribesmen are not always dependable. A few years ago, René Gardot walked out to the Namib desert and filled a sack with the wonderful stones. His plan was to slip out of the area by eventually crossing the border of the neighboring Portuguese colony of Angola and from there ship back to France.

Caught in a storm and completely out of water, Gardot staggered upon a group of Bushmen. Instead of helping him, the little men stripped him of his clothes and equipment, leaving him naked in the oven-hot sand. Before they departed, one kind-hearted Bushman ended Gardot's misery: he shot a bone-tipped poisoned arrow into Gardot's heart.

THERE are other unpredictable dangers lurking in the desert, like the tough luck that hit Carl Heuss. Poachers have to keep a wary eye out for the West African puff adder, hiding itself in the sand for hours with only its head showing. Many a poacher has been blinded by the Ringhals cobra, which shoots a stream of venom into the eyes of a man standing 10 or 15 feet away. A scorpion may attack the diamond hunter or he may fall victim to one of the fifty or more tropical diseases that infest the territory.

(*Continued on page* 56)

"I call it a bad day if I don't make $25 before noon"

(This chair alone brought $4.50 with twenty-five minutes work and 32¢ in cleaning materials.)

by Harold Holmes

"Just a few months ago I made the big move. I gave up my job and started spending all my time in the little business I had been running on the side. It wasn't an easy decision, but, now I'm tickled to death I made it. Not just because I'm my own boss or because I have an excellent chance of making over $10,000 this year. It goes deeper than that.

"You see, this idea has caught on like wildfire in my town. Not a day goes by without my phone ringing with women calling for appointments. The beauty of it is that once a woman becomes my customer, she calls back year after year. Not only that, she tells her friends, too, and they call me. Before I know it I'm swamped with work. (And at $7.50 an hour net profit it doesn't take long before my bank account is really mushrooming.)

"Funny thing, but back last year before I started, I never realized the money there was in this business waiting for someone to come along and collect it.

Concentrates On Better Homes

"Just think: every house in town has furniture and most have rugs or carpeting. I concentrate on just the better homes and have more work than I can handle. You know why? Because women are fussy about their furnishings. Can't stand to see them dirty. That's why they call me over every year.

"The average job is worth $25.00 to me and takes a little over 2 hours. Out of this, after paying for materials, advertising and other expenses I net about $15.00 clear profit. This means I need just 3 jobs a day to clear $11,250.00 in a year. Frankly, since this will be my first full-time year I'll be glad to hit the $10,000 mark. But after that this business should grow larger each year until I have to hire men to help me handle the business.

Trained by Another Dealer

"Believe me there's nothing magic about it. I didn't know a thing about cleaning home furnishings before I became a Duraclean dealer. But after my application was accepted I was trained right in town by a successful dealer from another city.

"I was astonished by the short time it took me to become an expert. Actually, much of the credit must go to the Duraclean process, which is so safe it has earned the Parents' Magazine Seal.

"The portable machine you see is just one of the electrical machines I use. It manufactures a light aerated foam with a peculiar action chemists call 'peptizing'. It means that instead of being scrubbed deep into the fabric, dirt is gently ABSORBED by the foam, leaving the fabric clean all the way down.

"Women can't believe their eyes when they see how it works. Colors appear bright again, and rug pile unmats and rises like new.

"I don't have to soak rugs or upholstery to get them clean, which ends the problem of shrinkage, and means the furnishings can be used again the very same day. This alone has brought me a lot of customers.

Offers Five Different Services

"As a Duraclean dealer I make money with four other services, too: ***Duraproof*** . . which makes furnishings immune to moth and carpet beetle damage (it's backed by a six year warranty). ***Durashield***, a brand new dirt-delaying treatment. It coats fabrics with an invisible film that keeps dirt out. ***Duraguard***, another new service, flameproofs draperies, upholstery and carpets to reduce charring and the tendency of fires to flame up. And ***Spotcraft***, which consists of special chemical products for removing stubborn spots and stains. On jobs where I perform all five services, I multiply profits!

"One of the nicest things about being a Duraclean dealer is that whenever I need help—whether it concerns advertising, lining up local retailers as agents, keeping business records, almost anything at all—I can write or phone Headquarters and I get prompt, expert guidance. They maintain a staff of experts who are going "all out" to make my business a success. My services are nationally-advertised in famous magazines like McCall's, House Beautiful and many others. I also get a complete advertising kit prepared by experts. (There's even a musical commercial!) I get a monthly magazine full of methods to build business and I can meet with other dealers at Duraclean conventions. I'm also backed by insurance. In fact there are over 25 regular services I get under their unique System.

Operates From Home

"Maybe you too would like to break away from your job and make a fresh start in a business of your own. Do you need a shop? Certainly not. I operate from home. Need a lot of money to start? Not at all. Duraclean finances reliable men, after a moderate down payment, and furnishes enough supplies to return your TOTAL investment.

"You get everything you need: equipment, supplies, advertising matter, personal training, and regular help from Headquarters. To get all the details, just fill out the coupon. There's no obligation and you can *decide for yourself*. I'll say one thing: if you DO become a Duraclean dealer, you'll be glad for the rest of your life that you took time today to write."

Irl H. Marshall, Jr., International Headquarters
Desk 8-31N, 839 Waukegan Avenue, Deerfield, Ill.

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I'm interested in owning my own business. Please send illustrated booklets and full details FREE outlining the Duraclean Dealership Program and territory arrangement.

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City..... State.....

(*Continued from page* 54)

Yet all these risks apparently don't faze the hordes of poachers and mine thieves who flock to South Africa. Man's greed for the earth's most concentrated treasure is evidently hard to discourage.

What happens to all those illegal diamonds that do get through? One thing is clear: enough are filched in the Union of South Africa and other diamantiferous countries to supply a vast undercover network of smugglers who every year clean up an estimated $60,000,000.

THIS diamond-cushioned underground stretches across the world, from the sweltering deserts and mines to the busy jewel exchanges on New York's 47th Street, from London's Soho to the back alleys of Calcutta and Bombay. The men in this ring are as intangible as phantoms, known to each other only by their first names. Interpol and South Africa's Detective Department believe it is headed by men who live most of the time in the United States. The network's Mr. Big is known to police only as *"l'Américain."*

The syndicate's tentacles reach out to involve many people not aware who's behind the smuggling. Some are innocent tourists who figure that taking a little package through customs in New York is an easy way to make a few hundred bucks. Others are small-time professionals with only a hazy notion of what they're carrying. Occasionally, however, big fish are caught in the police net. A few years ago, Brussels police received a tip on a distinguished personage, the former Minister from a South American country to Belgium. Searching him, they found $60,000 worth of smuggled gems sewed into his clothes.

Interpol, whose headquarters are in Brussels, has been conducting a world-wide investigation of the diamond underground. Thus far, they know that the smuggling usually begins in Kimberley or some other African diamond-mine town. Despite the most elaborate safeguards, workers still find ways—particularly in the small mines—of getting around the controls and detection devices to slip the diamonds out. Sometimes it's as simple as throwing a packet over a fence or using an intermediary such as a postman.

Generally, an agent of the syndicate, perhaps posing as a tradesman or even a visiting missionary, spots a worker who's a likely candidate and makes him a proposition.

"Just bring me a few diamonds every Saturday," he says, "and I'll pay you five times your wages every week of the year."

Stealing from the mines is severely punished in South Africa. But a miner's pay is notoriously low—about $10 a week—so the inducement is extremely tempting. Always there's a worker who'll take the chance. Out come the diamonds on the first leg of their circuitous journey.

Most of the stolen stones are first shipped to the centers of illegal diamond traffic in Africa: Accra, capital of Ghana; Dakar, in French West Africa, and Monrovia, capital of Liberia. There the diamonds are sorted according to size, color, shape and transparency. Just as in the legitimate industry, bort—imperfect crystals and fragments—are set aside to be used in the faceting and polishing of good stones. Only the finest diamonds are selected for shipping to the major cutting centers. In Antwerp, for instance, one of the most important cutting and marketing headquarters, the illegal trade of the smuggling network centers around the Rue du Pélican, the street of the diamond dealers.

Pure accident, not long ago, gave Interpol a lead. Monitoring the air waves, checking mail and telegraph offices, hadn't unearthed a single clue to how the ringleaders maintained contact with their partners abroad. One day an Interpol detective in London, working on a case which had nothing to do with diamonds, decided to look into an ad in a newspaper's personal column. The advertisement read:

"Allen, please contact me Claridge, Paris. Mother agrees. Important. Love. F.G.S."

It seemed like a routine message. But the man who placed the ad turned out to be under surveillance as a suspected member of the Antwerp diamond gang. Further investigation revealed the intricate system which had been worked out to signal an agent's arrival and departure. Two of the smugglers were arrested at the Claridge.

Besides Antwerp, the far-flung syndicate has operated from such unlikely places as a refugee camp at Idar-Oberstein in Germany. Another out-of-the-way drop was a small village north of Tel Aviv in Israel. At this important center, a number of European diamond cutters settled after the war and a few had been persuaded to handle hot stones. For a time, until Interpol got wise, Israel proved to be an excellent spot to work from because of the constant flow of travelers to and from the US.

From places like Israel, most of the illegal diamonds have been smuggled to their final destination by plane or boat, through passers paid $100 to $200 per diamond. But when customs men at airports and piers became too skillful at finding the hidden loot, the ring dropped its old-fashioned methods. Today, smugglers use modern techniques. Slipping into England, the ring uses speedboats to drop its cargo by night at isolated points on the English Channel or North Sea coast. Then radar-equipped trucks spot the incoming craft and pick up the packages.

To transport uncut diamonds swiftly and safely to subcontractors in Amsterdam, members of the Antwerp gang even organized a carrier pigeon service! The deliveries went on smoothly for a long time, until one day some of the pigeons were lost in a storm and came down on a farm. When the farmer picked up one of the weary birds, he was startled to find a two-carat diamond neatly fastened to each leg.

FEW of the hot stones remain in Europe once they are cut and ready. About 70 per cent of the gem stones are smuggled into the US, by far the best market, and sold under the counter in the shadier exchanges of New York. The remainder go to Asia and the Middle East, the British Commonwealth nations and Latin America.

The smuggling ring seems invulnerable. Three years ago, Scotland Yard thought it had dealt the traffic a mortal blow when detectives grabbed George First and Sidney Norman, said to be top bosses of the transit system. But after they were behind bars the smuggling went on with hardly a break.

Obviously, spectacular steps had to be taken by the diamond producing industry to stop the flow. One move was to hire Sir Percy Sillitoe as chief investigator of the De Beers Corporation. He should know his way around; Sir Percy began his career as a police lieutenant in South Africa 50 years ago and speaks half a dozen African languages fluently. In Europe and America, he can count on the co-operation of a united front of police and customs authorities in the most carefully co-ordinated campaign yet launched against the elusive enemy.

(*Continued on page* 58)

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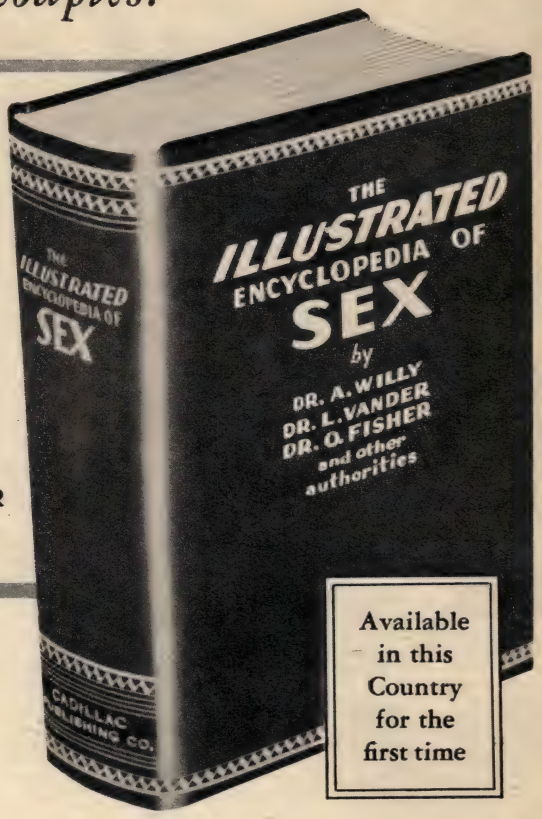

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DON'T let a bad complexion ruin romance, spoil your fun, cause you to be embarrassed, shy or ashamed. If you suffer from acne, the common external cause of pimples among young people, try this wonderfully effective medicated lotion that was developed by a practicing physician to clear up his own daughter's complexion after other methods had failed. It has produced astonishing results for many thousands of others. It is GUARANTEED to help you or it won't cost you a single cent!

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"I have been completely satisfied with your lotion to help clear up the pimples on my face."—K. W

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Payment must be sent with all orders to be shipped to A.P.O.'s, Canada and foreign countries.

(*Continued from page* 56)

Last April, the desperate diamond producers brought in the fabulous Commander Leonard J. Burt, who had just retired as head of Scotland Yard's Special Branch. Burt is famous for having cracked the cases of such atom spies as Klaus Fuchs and Allen Nunn May. Between Commander Burt and Sir Percy, the daring smuggling ring will have to keep on its toes.

The powerfully entrenched diamond combine has much to protect and preserve. More than 97 per cent of the world's annual diamond production comes from ten countries in Africa, led by the Belgian Congo and the Union of South Africa. In South Africa, most of the stones now come from vertical "pipes"—columns of blue clay in which the diamonds are concentrated—that are mined by the De Beers company. Diamonds that can be picked up in the desert, though they add up to uncounted wealth, are chicken feed compared to the treasures in the bowels of the earth.

In 1927, to check excessive alluvial finds which would touch off a price collapse, the South African government enacted its Diamond Control Bill ordering all prospectors off known diamantiferous land. Only major producers were allowed to continue operations—and on a drastically reduced scale. With the entire economy of the Union of South Africa significantly dependent on its diamonds, the country obviously has much at stake.

A major menace comes from Russia and other Iron Curtain countries which desperately need industrial diamonds. As in the U.S., these diamonds—one of the hardest substances known—are used to produce about every motor and precision instrument, in drilling for oil, uranium and other natural resources. Without industrial diamonds, there would be no jet aircraft, guided missiles, tanks or electronic equipment.

In Africa industrial diamonds have been placed on the forbidden list—not for export to the Communists. So the Reds, suspected of being behind their own big smuggling ring, are also sending agents to Africa to entice natives to steal and poach for them. The pay for contraband is so high that even guards and police have grabbed picks and shovels to get in on the gravy. In Sierra Leone, an important diamantiferous area, more diamonds were smuggled out last year than were exported on the legal market.

Another potential threat is the perfection last year of artificial industrial diamonds by General Electric. These man-made diamonds duplicate the color, clarity and hardness of natural diamonds, but the price is still much higher than for the genuine stone.

IT'S the smugglers, though, who give the diamond cartel its biggest headaches these days. Commander Burt, Sir Percy and Interpol are all convinced that, sooner or later, somewhere in America they'll pounce on Mr. Big and break the back of the international ring.

"Slowly but steadily," said an Interpol official the other day, "we're getting ready for the grand slam. But," he added cynically, "after we break up this smuggling syndicate, probably a new gang will be organized. Men will always lust for those scintillating baubles—as long as diamonds are a girl's best friend." ♦♦♦

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Never before! Now an amazing wonder drug contained in RX-120 available without a prescription! A miracle drug prescribed and tested by thousands of doctors for over 10 years! Take off ugly fat without special diets, without habit-forming drugs, calorie counting, exercise, hunger pangs, massage! Your own doctor can tell you about this great new victory over obesity!

Of all the problems that have baffled medical science, obesity has been one of the toughest to lick! Think of it – there are 67 million overweight men and women in America and nothing sold without a prescription—until this electrifying discovery . . . has done any good! Do you wonder why the whole medical profession is enthused about this amazing development that has produced such astonishing results when tried by thousands of doctors . . . when tested with brilliant success on thousands of patients? Do you wonder why the United States Government was happy to release this formula as SAFE to sell over any drug counter in the United States WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION? This is tremendous news . . . news that can change your whole life, lengthen your life span, make you healthier, happier, more active, younger looking . . . slender and glamorous instead of "matronly."

Yes, RX-120 is the fabulous formula scientists have sought for since Dr. Nooden published his report on obesity back in 1900. Everything offered without a prescription since then has failed miserably—chewing gums, liquids, powders, crackers and hundreds of other so called reducing preparations. You can take your doctor's word for it, the wonder drug in RX-120 does work . . . it helps you take off up to 49 pounds. The most extensive clinic testing ever devoted to any drug is back of RX-120. There's never been such overwhelming medical evidence, such convincing PROOF! There are no "ifs, ands or buts" with this miracle drug. In fact, we are so positive we will pay you $14.00 if you don't take off up to 49 pounds. Never before has any pharmaceutical company put such a daring guarantee in WRITING! The truth is no one could make such a guarantee because up to now there never has been a wonder drug sold over the counter that does such an amazing job of taking off unattractive excess weight!

HERE'S HOW YOU PROVE IT YOURSELF!

We don't have to tell you all the products you've wasted your money on trying to gain back your youthful figure are either frauds or too dangerous! You know this. Think back – you tried tablets that were supposed to put bulk in your stomach, you nibbled on cookies, ate crackers, swallowed liquid drops, tried chewing gums, ate candies, vitamin mixtures, went nearly out of your mind with calorie counters, pages of special diets! You got nervous, jumpy as a cat on risky drugs that many doctors condemned because of dangerous side effects! You'll be happy to hear all this is a thing of the past! Amazing new RX-120 contains such an advanced wonder drug it makes all other so called reducers old fashioned. RX-120 is an honest product. It really works! It's backed by more medical evidence than any other product ever sold to take off fat! No other effective product has proven so SAFE . . . that's why the United States Government released it as safe without a prescription in every city and hamlet in 48 states. It's true RX-120 will positively take off up to 49 pounds of excess weight caused by overeating or we'll pay you $14.00. There's no doubt about it. Here's one product you don't risk one cent to PROVE! It really works!

Think of it! You must lose 9 pounds in 10 days . . . 18 pounds in 20 days . . . 27 pounds in 30 days . . . and 49 pounds in 8 weeks . . . or the medicine is FREE. Now here's our unheard of offer—read it carefully. You must lose the minimum number of pounds stated here with RX-120 or we'll give you back every cent you paid for each vial of RX-120 tablets!

PROOF POSITIVE!

You must lose **49 POUNDS** in 8 weeks or we'll pay you **$14.00**	You must lose **27 POUNDS** in 30 days or we'll pay you **$7.00**
You must lose **18 POUNDS** in 20 days or we'll pay you **$5.00**	You must lose **9 POUNDS** in 10 days or we'll pay you **$3.00**

Let's make this perfectly clear. If you take RX-120 for 10 days and don't lose at least 9 pounds, we'll send you a check for $3.00. If you don't lose at least 18 pounds in 20 days, we'll send you a check for $5.00. If you don't get rid of at least 27 pounds in 30 days, we'll send you a check for $7.00. If you don't lose at least 49 pounds in only two months, we'll send you a check for $14.00. Did you ever read an offer like this in your life? No—and you NEVER WILL – because only a good product that does everything claimed could be backed by such a guarantee!

The only reducing product where you see these words on the label!
"FOR TREATMENT OF OVERWEIGHT"
The law doesn't permit any other type of reducing product to print this on the label. Any government agent can tell you why. Because other types of reducing products just don't work. Unlike these other products, the miracle drug contained in RX-120 is a real medicine, a tested formula—made exclusively "to reduce excess weight." It really works! You don't have to count calories, follow a dull plan, exercise, eat special foods, resort to iron will power. Take these tiny, tasteless pills as directed! You'll be amazed at how fast you really take off ugly fat! You may lose up to 49 pounds or we'll pay you $14.00.
RX-120
for treatment of Overweight
Each of RX-120's Slim-Trim

HERE'S HOW RX-120 WORKS!

Unlike other reducing products you may have tried, new RX-120 works on an entirely different principle. It does four amazing things starting the very second you swallow the first tiny tablet—

(1) It depresses your appetite.
(2) It acts on your central nervous system; decreases your desire for food.
(3) It acts in your intestinal tract—fights hunger contractions—telegraphs a "stop signal" to your brain when you're tempted to overeat or indulge in between-meal snacks!
(4) It makes the food you eat stay in your stomach for a longer period.

Just think what this means to you! With this amazingly SAFE formula—that does not have the terrible side effects of other reducing drugs – your body will oxidize fat automatically as you eat less food . . . excess weight will literally vanish into thin air! Yes, your weight goes down, down, down every single day. The exciting part is you don't have to torture yourself with starvation diets! You don't have to take food supplements, habit forming drugs! You don't have to follow long winded reducing plans! You don't have to bore yourself counting calories! You don't have to exercise, spend miserable hour after hour in reducing salons! A whole new world will open up as you discover you can eat and enjoy the thousands of delicious, nutritious low calorie foods! You will live an active normal life—feel better than you ever did in your life—while you TRIM down to a glamorous figure in days, weeks! For now at last you can get RX-120 containing the new doctor tested wonder drug—without a prescription!

HELPS YOU RETRAIN YOUR EATING HABITS!

Doctors tell us that in most cases you are fat because you overeat. It's as simple as that! You may not realize it but fat people have what amounts to an abnormal craving for food. YOUR appetite is aroused by the VERY smell and sight of certain foods. Be honest now. How many times have you started to reduce only to find you just can't stop or even CUT DOWN between-meal snacks? Over-eating soon becomes a deeply ingrained habit you can't break. "But why do I have this craving for food?" you ask. There are many reasons. Good food and lots of it may have been a family tradition. Some consider rich food a symbol of success.

What can you do about it? The answer has been a difficult problem to solve until the development of the wonder ingredient in RX-120. You know how hard it is to change long established habits. You know self-denial is not easy. You know how almost impossible it is to develop a will power of iron! But with new RX-120 you can change your habits – practically overnight. You can eat less without giving up the foods that taste so good. Down comes caloric intake—off comes excess fat. You don't have to rely on strong will power. You don't have to fight yourself every time you're tempted. Now you can take off that excess weight . . . without your ever being conscious of it!

GET YOUR RX-120 BEFORE IT IS RELEASED TO DRUG STORES!

Remember, RX-120 is not a diet, not a dull plan or regimen that tells you what to eat! It's not an ordinary dietary supplement—it's a clinically tested, doctor approved medicine that has been PROVED effective when tried on over 2,000 overweight patients! . . . according to published reports. We'll be glad to send your doctor medical literature. RX-120 has been released as SAFE by the United States Government for sale without a prescription . . . but supply is limited. It won't be shipped to drug stores until November 15, 1958. But you can order direct from Wilson-Williams Inc., 273 Columbus Ave., Tuckahoe, N. Y.—if you act now! So hurry—order your RX-120 right NOW. Just fill out the coupon today and mail it while you're thinking about it. RX-120 is sent to you on a no risk 10-day trial.

Remember, you must lose 9 pounds in 10 days or we pay you $3.00. You must lose 18 pounds in 20 days or we pay you $5.00. You must take off 27 pounds in 30 days or you get $7.00. You must PROVE you can lose up to 49 pounds in just 8 weeks or we pay you $14.00. You have nothing to lose but ugly fat!

SEND NO MONEY! FREE 10 DAY TRIAL!

Fill out coupon below. Be sure to indicate the size of RX-120 you want us to rush to you immediately! Start taking RX-120 the day it arrives. Check your scales every day. Keep a careful record of your weight losses! Remember, you must lose 9 pounds in just 10 days or we pay you $3.00. You can just as easily take off 18 pounds, 27 pounds or up to 49 pounds depending on the number of days you take this new wonder drug! Don't forget, you must lose the minimum number of pounds claimed or you get every cent back. If you don't lose 9, 18, 27 or up to 49 pounds—merely send us proof of purchases. Yes, you must lose up to 49 pounds with NEW RX-120 or we will rush you a check for $14.00. Don't wait—check the quantity wanted, fill in the coupon today and mail it right now. You don't have to send any money—your first bottle will be rushed to you. But do it NOW!

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Rush my RX-120 immediately. I must lose pounds guaranteed by you above or you will pay me the amount specified.

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BOOT HILL FOR NEVADA SAM BROWN

Continued from page 42

Sun Mountain and that he'd fill another before he left.

A madman, the Washoe miners called him; a butcher, a fiend. Yet no miner in the saloon that night had the courage to step forward and send a pistol ball through the sleeping killer's brain.

Instead they picked up the body of the latest man to stand up to Sam Brown and carried it from the saloon. A few of the men wondered who would be the next to be struck down by the killer. But probably no one in C Street that night pondered on the twisted strands of circumstances that started Sam Brown wandering down his tortured path toward hell.

AN evening hawk soared on the currents of air rising from the chaparral slopes of the Sangre de Cristo range. The chaparral blended into aspen and pine as the northern New Mexico country gained altitude and darker shadows showed where the canyon bottoms deepened.

This was wild country. No wagon tracks pressed ugly furrows across the knee-deep ripening grasses. No fences broke the soft lines of the swelling mountains.

A sudden movement on the ground caught the scouting hawk's eye. It circled, then glided away on a wash of warm air. Something on the ground had frightened the winged predator, something hidden along the canyon bottom, cloaked in aspen, ringed by pine.

There were three of them.

Three men.

The two Americans, Noble Snaeth and Cal Jugger, had found the abandoned cabin, snugged in a canyon's bend in the Cristos. The weatherbeaten remains of a covered wagon were stacked against its walls. Snaeth and Jugger had been running at the time, running from a posse. The two men were wanted from New Orleans to Santa Fe for crimes that included murder, rape and the looting of dead bodies. Fleeing from Santa Fe, they had joined forces with Mendariz, a Basque sheepherder, who left behind a wife with a slashed throat.

The trio moved into the cabin and lived like animals. From time to time Mendariz went out of the range for provisions. By day the three men worked at a paying placer mine that adjoined the cabin. At night they plotted the outrages they would commit when they returned to civilization.

It was into this depraved den that young Sam Brown, a hulking, red-haired, not overly bright Texan rode that afternoon. He was alone and armed only with an old Hawken rifle.

Brown was obviously astonished at finding the cabin in the wilderness. "Howdy," he called out as he rode into the cabin clearing. "Didn't expect to find anyone in this woolly piece of country."

Slim, dark-visaged Snaeth walked up to the mounted youth. "Who told you you'd find us here?" he demanded suspiciously.

"Nobody," Brown insisted. "Like I said, I never knew there was a soul in these parts. I haven't seen a human in three days. Been following this stream, hoping it'd lead to a way across the range." He patted his war bag. "Carrying all my grub right here. Killed a rabbit last night."

"And nobody knows you're in this part of the country?" Snaeth pressed again.

Brown grinned. "I reckon not. You see I ran away from home. Heading for Montana Territory. Pa's got a brother up there. A trapper. Figure it'll beat grubbing for a living in West Texas."

Snaeth turned to squat, bald, toadlike Jugger, spoke softly, "What do you think, Cal?"

"Could be he's brought a posse with him. It'd be a smart trick to send the kid in first to scout us out," Jugger answered.

"Could be Mendariz talked too much last time he was out. The kid might be looking for a chance to cut in on our placer claim," Snaeth spoke loud enough for the Basque to hear.

"You know better than that," Mendariz countered easily. "I tell no one where we are. I make sure no one follows." Mendariz whittled at an aspen twig with a razor-sharp bowie knife.

"I don't like it," Jugger said then.

Snaeth turned, squinted up at the perplexed youth who had been able to catch little of the exchange.

"Not often we get visitors here. Step down from your horse and stay a mite," Snaeth invited. Brown, unsuspecting, climbed down from the saddle, stretched. Mendariz took the reins, led the mount away.

"See you've got a mine here," Brown said, taking in the gravel bar, the diverted stream, the sluice boxes.

"He's got bright eyes," Jugger said mockingly. Brown turned to the two men, sensing something out of line.

"You're poking fun at me. I didn't mean to come up on you unannounced. Maybe it would be better if I just kept on riding."

Snaeth lashed out, hit the youth in the mouth with an open hand. "You ain't going any place, kid," he snarled. Brown, by reflex, started to bring up the Hawken which he still held. Snaeth clubbed the youth alongside the head with a knotted fist, kneed him hard. Brown doubled over. Jugger stepped up, kicked the injured youth, sent him sprawling into the gravel. Snaeth picked up the Hawken, leveled the big bore at the flabbergasted Texan boy's ringing head.

"You had no cause to do that," Brown protested with effort.

"Maybe not," Snaeth answered. "But then on the other hand maybe there's a posse waiting down the creek a ways."

"I give you my word," Brown started.

"Your word ain't worth hog fat," Jugger retorted. "If a posse is waiting down there we'll know soon enough. And we'll be ready for them." Jugger turned to Snaeth. "What do we do with the kid?"

"Lock him in the dugout," Snaeth ordered. "If he yells, club him. And get his horse out of sight. Let's see what comes up the creek."

The trio, armed and hidden along the bank of the stream, waited until after dark. Then Snaeth sent Mendariz on a scout down the tributary. The Basque was gone an hour.

"Nothing," he reported when he got back. "No tracks except the boy's and my own from the last trip out. The kid was telling the truth."

Jugger laughed, relieved. "I was almost itching for a good scrap," he boasted.

"What about the kid now?" Mendariz asked.

"If we turn him loose he'll be running off at the mouth about the cabin to the first lawman he sees," Jugger commented.

"Do we kill him?" Mendariz, the sadist, asked.

"Jugger," Snaeth said easily, "I'm getting damned tired of working that placer mine. How about you?"

"Damned tired," Jugger agreed, running a hand over his bald bullet-head.

"It would be nice if we had some strong-backed youngster doing some of the heavy work for us, now wouldn't it?"

Understanding shone in Jugger's eyes. "It would be damned nice."

"In the morning," Snaeth said, "we'll have a new man at the mine."

"YOU'VE got a choice," Snaeth looked down at the youth who was blinking in the early morning light. Brown had spent the night in the dugout. Snaeth, Jugger and Mendariz had unlocked the door, called in to the youth.

"You've got a choice," Snaeth repeated.

"What kind of a choice?" Brown asked hoarsely.

"You can work for us here, doing some odd jobs. For which we'll give you your grub and a place to sleep." Jugger grinned at the way Snaeth was explaining it.

"Or?" Brown asked.

"Or we kill you, here and now," Snaeth bit out the answer.

"You don't give me much choice," said Brown, getting to his feet.

"It's up to you," Snaeth's hand went to the gun at his belt

"How long is this arrangement supposed to last?" Brown asked.

"Come winter, the snow is navel-deep to a tall Indian. We'll be out of here before then. And when that time comes we'll ride our way, you ride yours."

Brown shook his head, baffled.

"Well?" Snaeth pressed.

"I'll work," Brown answered. "I'll work until I get a chance to get away."

Snaeth grinned. "That may take a while."

THAT'S how it all started. That morning Sam Brown, fresh from his soddy home in Texas, a youth barely into his 20s, started shoveling gravel into the Sangre de Cristo long tom. It was a nightmare that would last seven months.

The trio took turns standing guard over Brown at the placer diggings. Brown learned to hate them all with a passion that flamed brighter day after day.

It was Snaeth's idea to take the youth's shoes away from him. "You'll never get out of here barefoot," Snaeth laughed.

One night Brown wrenched open the locked door to the dugout, fled down the canyon. By midmorning his bare feet were a bloody hash. Mendariz, on horseback, caught up with him before noon. It was Mendariz who made Brown walk all the way back to the cabin on his ruined feet. It was Mendariz who prodded Brown along with the point of the bowie knife. The festering sores the knife left across Brown's back took weeks to heal.

It was Jugger who dreamed up the idea of chaining Brown to the aspen log. From that day on Brown had to drag the 12-foot log from the dugout to the placer mine and back every day. After that there was no need to lock the dugout door at night.

It was Jugger who enjoyed throwing Brown's food into the dirt. It was Jugger, that first day, who emptied the personal contents of Brown's war bag into an offal heap.

Brown's red beard grew matted and rancid. Standing knee-deep in the stream all day every day, he developed ulcers on his legs. The iron ring chafed his ankle into a persistent infection. By midsummer Brown looked like a scarecrow: gaunt, hollow-eyed, filthy.

From dawn to dark he worked at the placer mine; at night he dragged the aspen pole back to the dugout, wolfed the food Jugger threw in the dirt before him, fell into an exhausted, tortured sleep. With the log chained to his leg, it was impossible to escape. One night, in a delirium of despondency and desperation, he tried to bash his brains out against the stone doorway of the dugout. He knocked himself unconscious, and the next morning he staggered down to the placer mine, his head caked with blood. Snaeth and Jugger made no mention of the incident.

The summer wore slowly into fall. As the days shortened, Brown often heard Snaeth and Jugger talking about pulling out of the canyon before winter. The tormented Brown knew that the trio had no intention of letting him ride away when they left. He knew he would have to escape before the first snow fell across the Sangre de Cristo, or the melting slush would expose his bones the following spring.

Brown found a sharp shard of flint in the stream one day. It gave him new hope. He secreted it in his tattered trousers, each night scraped with the sharp stone at the staple that held the chain to the aspen log. It was an endless chore. The flint flaked away, dulled, finally broke in half, lacerating Brown's blistered hands. He continued at the job until the tiny shards of flint were worn away. Then he combed the placer's gravel with his fingers constantly until he found other pieces of flint.

Finally, one chill night, he loosened the pin, worked the steel staple loose from the log. With a grin that cracked his sun-blistered lips, Brown savored the moment. Then he shoved the staple back into the log, fell asleep. Tomorrow would be the day.

The next morning the intense cold woke Brown before first light. Clouds had moved in over the range during the night. They had lowered until they scraped their black, swollen bellies across the tops of the nearby peaks. Brown could smell the change in the weather. The first sparse snowflakes began to fall.

Brown crouched in the mouth of the dugout, watching the cabin. Jugger was the first man out. He walked into the clearing, glanced up at the sky, shook his head, walked back inside again. Then Snaeth came out with him, and the two men looked at the sky, at the placer and down stream. Finally Snaeth pointed at the dugout, went back into the cabin, came out with the Hawken. Together Snaeth and Jugger walked across the clearing toward the dugout.

The last day. Brown ran the velvet of the words over and over again in his mind. His

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hand gripped a bight of the chain and he crouched there, waiting for the man to walk up to him.

"Your job's all done," Jugger grinned down at the tattered scarecrow crouched in the filth at the mouth of the dugout. Brown, as usual, didn't answer.

"Ain't you happy, kid?" Jugger went on, enjoying the game he was playing. "You don't have to shovel gravel today. You've done such a good job you've made us all rich men. We're going to Denver to spend our money."

"We'd like to take you with us," Snaeth joined in. "But you know how it is." He raised the Hawken slightly as if to punctuate the remark. "It ain't that you're not wanted, kid, but we've only four horses, counting your mount. We'll be packing our dust out on your old mare. And we wouldn't want you to walk all the way back to Santa Fe barefoot." He inched the Hawken up higher.

The sport had worn thin with Jugger. "Get it over with, Snaeth," he growled, turning toward the smaller man.

Brown moved then. He tightened his hold on the bight of chain and the staple slipped out of the aspen log. Brown rose, flipped the chain. Six feet of iron links whiplashed across Snaeth's face. The small man screamed, dropped the rifle, covered his ruined face with his hands. Blood spilled brightly out between his fingers.

Jugger moved toward the Hawken. Brown caught him before he could reach for the gun. The scarecrow flipped a loop of chain around the squat man's head, jerked it tight. Jugger's face purpled with imprisoned blood. His eyes protruded. His mouth gaped open. Brown levered tighter on the loop of chain. Jugger's neck snapped audibly. Brown flipped Jugger out of the fold of chain, stepped up to Snaeth who was tottering, still cradling his mutilated face in his hands. Brown swung the length of chain up and down. The iron links clubbed against Snaeth's skull, dashed the man to the ground. In a frenzy, Brown flailed at the bleeding form again and again.

Mendariz stepped from the cabin then, saw the action. With fluid grace he slipped the bowie knife from its sheath, started running toward Brown.

Brown looked up, saw Mendariz when the Basque was scant feet away. He threw himself to one side. Mendariz' first lunge with the knife went wide. Mendariz tripped in the chain and Brown leaped onto him. With fingers tempered to steel by months of wielding a gravel shovel, Brown caught the Basque's knife hand, twisted the blade free. Mendariz scrambled to his feet. Brown was all over him, slashing with the knife. With a savage upthrust he disemboweled the Basque. Mendariz hunched over, trying to hold himself together with his hands. Then he fell face-down in the gravel.

IT was all over. Brown stood blankly for a moment, unable to comprehend the fact that he was free. Then the red rage swarmed over him again and he flailed the fallen men with the sodden chain until the thickening snowfall brought him to his senses.

The swollen clouds spat snow off and on all that day. And it took Brown the better part of it to hack the chain from his leg. He worked awkwardly with a hammer and chisel, stopping only when his muscles cramped at the unfamiliar labor.

He rummaged through the cabin, found boots, coat, shirt and trousers. He stripped Mendariz of his belt, knife and sheath. He took the Hawken and a bag of food. He took the buckskin pokes of gold dust, filled his old war bag. Turning three of the horses loose, he rode down the stream away from the cabin, more a beast than a man.

From Santa Fe, where he spent most of the gold dust, he rode west, following for a while a wagon train of Mormon emigrants. He was taciturn and swaggering by turns. He trusted no one, was suspicious of friendly overtures, slept alone and fully armed. He acquired a six gun and practiced whenever he had shells, but he never fully mastered the handgun. He was never without the bowie knife, which at times seemed almost an extension of his right arm.

FULL-BEARDED, wild of eye, bestial in appearance, Sam Brown rode into the Fiddletown placers along the South Forks of the Consumnes River in the Mother Lode in the spring of 1854.

Showing a strange skill at placer mining for a newcomer to the camps, Brown set up a long tom on Big Indian Creek, started sluicing gold-dust-peppered gravel through the trough. He kept to himself, traded most of his gold for whiskey, built himself a solid reputation as a bad actor.

Later that summer a man by the name of Ryan staked out a placer claim upstream from Sam Brown's diggings. Brown ignored the newcomer.

One day Ryan was on his way to Fiddletown with his poke. He stopped at Brown's long tom. "Keep an eye on my claim while I'm in town, will you?" Ryan asked cordially.

Brown looked up from his spot knee-deep in the swirling water of Big Indian Creek.

"I look after no man's claim but my own," Brown answered darkly.

Ryan ignored the rebuff, squatted down on the bank. "I was thinking," Ryan said. "Instead of both of us working separate claims, why don't we go together, work both claims as one? Build a big sluice. Cut down some of the gravel from that bar above my place. I'll bet we'd get fat."

Brown stormed out of the water. "I'd see you in hell before I'd muck for you. Do your own digging and get off my claim."

Ryan was stunned by Brown's angry reaction. He tried to placate the big man. "No harm done," Ryan smiled. "I was only suggesting that we might do better working together."

Brown's hand moved to the handle of his bowie knife. "Move out," he said softly. His yellow eyes were flat, lustreless.

Ryan still thought he could make friends with the big man. He took a step forward, held out a friendly hand.

Brown drew the knife, swung at Ryan. The broad blade laid Ryan's arm open from wrist to elbow. Ryan screamed, grabbed the injured arm, turned and ran.

In Fiddletown the almost hysterical Ryan muttered over and over as the doctor sewed up the slashed arm. "He's a madman, a madman."

"I'd stay away from him, then," the doctor suggested sagely.

"A man like him ought to be locked up," Ryan insisted.

The doctor, who had seen more than his share of strange things along the Mother Lode, advised: "I'd leave him be. I've seen these solitary types. They usually mean what

"We've decided to have a new kind of fire sale. Any salesman who doesn't meet his quota will be fired."

they say. You're lucky he only caught you in the arm."

But Ryan wasn't lucky. The wounded arm festered; three weeks later he was dead from gangrene.

Sam Brown's reputation along the Consumnes placers grew.

A year later he was in a bar brawl in Whiskey Flat. The bowie knife did its work too well. Brown was arrested, sentenced to a year in San Quentin. Imprisonment drove Brown wild. He battled with prison guards; clawed, bit and raged. They threw him into solitary. He screamed and rioted constantly. Finally he spent three months shackled to rings set in the floor of a darkened pit. The last glimmer of sanity had gone from his eyes when he was released, more than two years from the date he entered the prison.

Brown, a hulking, bass-voiced loner, returned to the mining camps from San Quentin. For a while he ran a sluice box on the Middle Fork of the Yuba. By 1859 he was known throughout the Mother Lode as Fighting Sam Brown, an unpredictable killer. He was reputed to have committed 16 murders when he crossed the high mountains and rode into the hard-rock mines of Virginia City.

The Comstock was a young camp. Sam Brown lost no time in establishing his position among the ruffians who swaggered through the Washoe district.

Brown always picked on solitary saloon characters. He never tackled an armed man or a man with known friends. His victims were saloon loungers, miners down on their luck, unarmed, friendless vagrants.

In a killing mood, Sam Brown was easy to insult. Then it was lunge and grab. Holding his victim tight around the neck with one arm, Brown pulled his bowie knife—the weapon he had carried away from that Sangre de Cristo clearing one winter—and stabbed his victim repeatedly until his lust for blood was sated.

There was no law in the raw, booming camp. Ruffians like Brown, El Dorado Johnny, Langford Peel, Jack Davis terrorized the town. It became so bad that many of the less brave storekeepers and miners pulled out of the Comstock; only the casehardened veteran miners stayed behind.

ED ABIGALE walked into the Curly Horse Saloon in Virginia City, proudly displayed a leather bag of California-minted $20 gold pieces, told the boys he was going home to Ohio.

"Saved every one of these I got my hands on," he told the crowd.

"Didn't you get awful thirsty?" someone joshed.

"Awful thirsty," Abigale confessed. "Here's how I beat that. Every time I got a 20, I cut a bit from the edge of the coin." He tossed a few of the gold pieces on the bar, pointed out a tiny triangular chunk nicked out of each coin.

"I hammered out the pieces I cut, and when I thought I had enough I took the grains to an assayer. It wasn't fine gold, but it was enough for a good drunk." Abigale dropped the coins back into the poke. "They're all marked that way. Every one. I had a real thirst."

The boys roared in good-natured sympathy and bought Ed Abigale a drink.

In the crowd that night was a silent Sam Brown.

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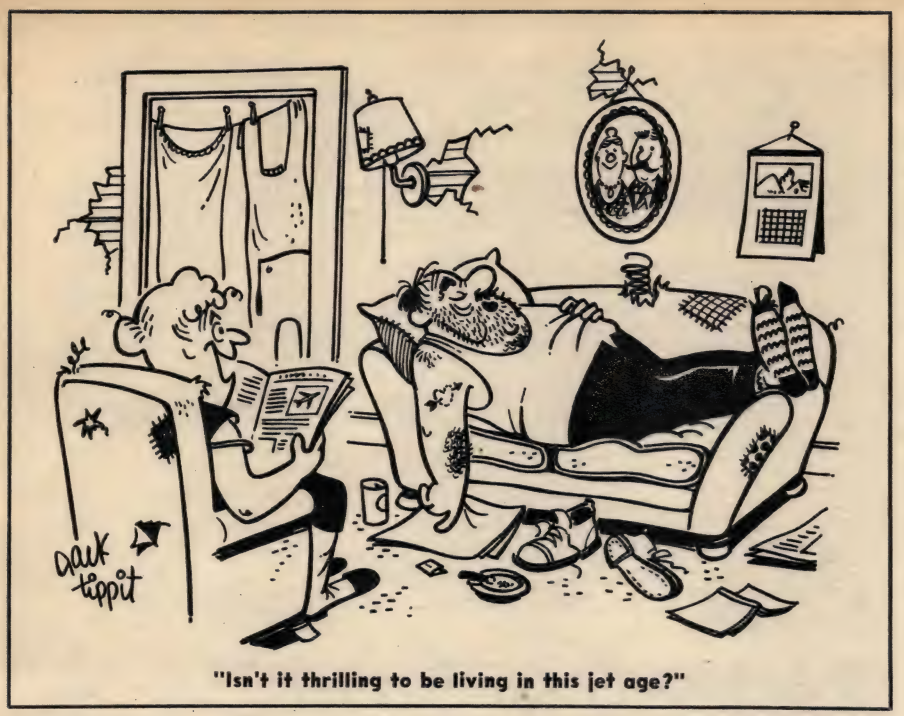

"Isn't it thrilling to be living in this jet age?"

Shortly after Abigale left the Curly Horse, Brown also departed.

Abigale climbed on his horse, started riding toward Genoa, an established camp some miles to the southwest. From Genoa Abigale planned to catch a stage for the East.

Sam Brown followed until the lights of town were left behind. Then he closed in on the homeward-bound miner.

"Wait up," Brown called out when he was within voice range of the miner. "Wait up, Abigale, and I'll ride along with you."

Abigale thought it was a crony from the mines, reined up his horse.

The next minute he was looking through the night at Sam Brown. Brown's yellowed teeth gleamed in the moonlight.

Abigale tried to make the best of a bad situation. "You riding to Genoa?" he asked.

"Nope," Brown answered laconically.

"That's where I'm bound," Abigale explained, a sudden spot of ice spreading across his spine. "I'd better be moving out."

"First, hand over the bag of 20s," Brown said softly. "That first."

"I've got no money, Brown," Abigale protested. "None at all."

"I was in the Curly Horse," Brown went on, his bass voice low and easy. "I saw the poke."

"I'll see you in hell first!" Abigale screamed and whipped up his horse. Brown drew the six gun, lifted it coolly and fired once. Abigale fell heavily from the saddle. His spooked horse ran on into the night.

A few evenings later Sam Brown walked into the Curly Horse, plopped a golden California 20 on the polished hardwood and demanded a drink. The bartender picked up the coin, glanced at it oddly.

"It's notched," the bartender said. Several idle drinkers looked up. "It's notched, just like the ones Ed Abigale had." There was a murmur of agreement along the bar.

"They say Abigale never got to Genoa," a miner farther down the hardwood spoke up. "They say they found his horse out on the flats."

"Anybody can have a notched coin," Brown explained easily.

The bartender was feeling brave that night. "Ed Abigale stood right there the other evening and told us how he notched his California 20s," the barman went on. He looked closely at the coin.

Brown laid his big bowie knife on the bar. "You got another 20?" he asked. The bartender swallowed hard, reached over to the cashbox, dug out a suitable coin.

Brown took the disk, nicked a triangular piece from the coin with the bowie knife.

"There's a California 20 with a notch in it," he said defiantly, tossing the coin on the hardwood. "Let's hear you say it belonged to Abigale."

No one spoke. Not while the bowie knife lay naked on the bar. The bartender served Brown his drink, counted out his change scrupulously. Brown drank, drank again before he sheathed the big knife and left the bar.

Everyone in the Curly Horse that night knew what had happened to Ed Abigale. Of course the miner's body hadn't been found. But that was no mystery. There were a hundred pits and glory holes on the flats outside Sun Mountain where a body could be dumped and hidden forever.

Sam Brown's cemetery was filling up. But it was filling up faster than the bearded man dreamed. The end was in sight.

A Comstock tough by the name of Billy Bianco got into a shooting scrape in Genoa. He was arrested, ordered to stand trial.

Brown, in Virginia City, heard of the trial. He knew Billy Bianco, and, while Brown claimed no friends and traveled with no particular gang, he thought he'd help the badman out of his spot.

Brown bragged around Virginia City that he'd go to Genoa, that he'd not only get Bianco off free but he'd make the court like it.

News of Brown's threat ran down the hill to Genoa ahead of the bearded badman.

Helping the district attorney to prosecute the case was a young lawyer by the name of Bill Stewart, a tiger among Nevada barristers. Stewart got wind of Brown's boast minutes before the big ruffian rode into town, Spanish spurs jingling.

Stewart, no stranger to frontier justice, carried twin derringers.

When Brown swaggered into Judge Cradlebaugh's court, already in session, Stewart walked up to the bearded man, pulled the derringers, aimed them directly at Brown's head.

"Move," Stewart ordered. "Move over there and sit down," Stewart had motioned toward the witness chair.

With the guns aimed full at his head, Brown was sworn in. The jury and courtroom spectators were nervous by this time, sat on the edges of their chairs, ready to duck or run, whichever presented a better future.

"Have you any evidence to give in this case?" Stewart demanded.

Brown shook his head.

"Speak up, man," Stewart insisted. "Say it out."

"No," the bearded man answered.

"Do you know the defendant?" Stewart asked.

Brown allowed that he did.

"Would you say he was a man of the highest character?"

Someone in the courtroom tittered.

"Have you ever heard of the defendant being mixed up in shooting scrapes before?" Stewart pressed on.

Brown confessed that he had heard of such things regarding Bianco's past.

By this time Bianco's attorney had gathered up enough composure to protest Stewart's questioning.

"Why, the man is intimidating the witness," the defense attorney howled.

Stewart smiled. He tossed the derringers up and down in his hands.

"Do you feel that you are being intimidated?" Stewart asked Brown. It was almost more than the badman could stand. Suppressed laughter was sweeping the courtroom. All Brown could do was to muster another negative answer.

"The fact is," Brown went on. "I actually came to Genoa to see you, Stewart."

"Oh?" replied the attorney.

"You see, I got into a bit of trouble in Plumas County, over in California. A charge of assault with a deadly weapon. I was intending to go back to California. I heard you were the best lawyer in the country. I wonder if you would represent me in the matter?"

Before Stewart could answer, Sam Brown dug into his trousers, came up with $500 which he offered the attorney as a retainer. The lawyer calmly accepted the money. Brown then offered to treat the court. The court, a little sweaty around the edges by this time, accepted the offer. Everyone moved down Genoa's main street, a strange procession, to a bar where Brown bought drinks for the lot.

IT was a humiliating blow to the badman. Brown rode out of town brooding over the loss to his prestige. The farther he rode the madder he got.

Brown rode up to the wayside inn of Henry Van Sickle in a towering rage.

Van Sickle, hearing the clang of spurs, ran out of the inn.

"Supper's just ready, Mr. Brown," he spoke affably to the badman.

"How are you feeling tonight?" Brown asked.

"First rate," Van Sickle answered.

"That's too damned bad," Brown roared

and started shooting at the innkeeper. Bullets zinged all around Van Sickle as he ran for the dining room. Brown followed, continuing to pump lead. In the confusion that exploded in the crowded dining room, Van Sickle escaped. There were too many men present for Brown to take them all on. He rode away, cursing, threatening Van Sickle loudly.

The innkeeper knew Brown's reputation. He knew the badman would get him sooner or later. There was only one thing left to do. . . .

VAN SICKLE went into the house, caught up a double-barreled shotgun loaded with fine birdshot. He mounted a horse, rode after Brown. A mile up the road he caught up with the badman. Brown fired first. Van Sickle held his fire, trying to get closer. When he was nearly on top of Brown, Van Sickle fired both barrels of the shotgun. The blast blew Brown off his horse. Apparently unhurt, Brown climbed back up on his mount and snapped another shot at Van Sickle, whipped up his horse and rode away.

Van Sickle reloaded his gun, chased after Brown again. This time the double-barreled blast only knocked Brown's hat off.

Brown was in a panic now. The innkeeper was out for blood. Brown leaned low over his horse, worked with the Spanish spurs.

Van Sickle was out of ammunition. It might have ended right there, but a friend from the inn galloped up with reloads.

Rearming the shotgun, Van Sickle once more took off in pursuit of the fleeing badman.

Nearly five miles closer to Sun Mountain Van Sickle got another chance. Again he missed. It was getting dark. Sobbing with exhaustion and frustration, Van Sickle took a short cut across the badlands, came back to the trail, reloaded, and, in the full dark, waited for Brown.

After a while he began to fear that the bearded man had already slipped past. But then he heard a familiar sound coming up the trail toward him. It was the chiming of Brown's Spanish spurs.

Van Sickle hid in the cover of bushes along the trail. When Brown was within a few feet of his hide-out, Van Sickle called out to him.

"Try to kill an unarmed man, will you?" shrieked the almost hysterical Van Sickle.

Brown gave a low cry. "Don't do it, Van," he cried. "For God's sake, don't do it." The big man was sobbing.

Van Sickle lifted the shotgun, pressed both triggers. The blast caught Brown full in the face. He was killed instantly.

A few days later an inquest was held. The jury wasted little time coming up with a verdict. It was a classic.

"Samuel Brown," read the jury foreman, "has come to his death from a just dispensation of an all-wise Providence."

The foreman paused, then added: "It served him damned well right."

The coroner's gavel banged down and the inquest was over.

There would be other hard cases in the frontier camp, but none to match the bass-voiced ruffian who wore Spanish spurs and tied his long side whiskers up under his chin. Nor none with such a tortured past.

When Sam Brown died, an era ended on Sun Mountain. The day of the badman was passing. Law was finally coming to the Comstock. ◆◆◆

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MAROONED IN PARADISE

Continued from page 15

Akio in a language that sounded like gibberish to the Japanese. Akio shook his head in confusion. As a student in Tokyo, he had taken the compulsory language courses but had never heard any sound comparable to the utterance of the Arab. He supposed the man was speaking in a North African dialect.

And then, to the amazement of Mitanabe, the Arab demanded identification in perfect French.

"WILL wonders never cease?" the officers of the court marveled, sardonically.

Akio continued his statement. "We are sailors who have lost our ship," he told his captor in French.

"You are Frenchmen come to imprison us," the Arab lashed back.

"Look at us," Akio pleaded. "Do we look like Frenchmen? Do we look strong enough to take you prisoners?"

"I've never seen a Frenchman," the Arab growled. "But you do not look like gendarmes. We'll take you to the sheiks."

The Arabs shoved Akio, Orri Tyoto and Masao Yamamoto to their feet and pushed them inland. On the far side of Tabelbala was a cove, almost a lagoon, and on the cove the people of Tabelbala had built their village. The architecture of the huts was a combination of the high, inverted-cone type of shelter built by the New Caledonian natives of bark and reeds, and the Polynesian-type hut of grass and fronds. Seated in front of the large hut which dominated the village —the long house, a kind of bachelor's home found in each Polynesian community—were four ancient Arabs. The Japanese were thrown on the ground in front of the old men.

The captor spoke to the sheiks, informing them, apparently, of the conditions of his discovery. The sheiks shook their heads, denying the statement of the young man.

"They are not French," the head sheik said with assurance. "They are Orientals."

"We are Japanese," Akio said respectfully to the leader. "Our ship has been sunk in a sea battle."

The old-timer leaned forward eagerly and pressed Akio for details. They were told of the great war in which Akio's country was engaged against France, among other nations.

"He is a friend," the sheik shouted jubilantly. "His emperor is at war against the French."

Akio was dumfounded. In the midst of the Allied forces' most active theater, he had run across an anachronistic colony of people hostile to both Americans and Frenchmen.

"How long have you been on this island?" Akio asked.

"Sixty-four years," the sheik answered.

"How did you come to land here?" Akio wanted to know.

The old men declined to answer that question.

With the information that Akio and his companions had an enemy in common with the Arabs, the people of the village prepared a feast of welcome. The Japanese were made to understand that they were honored guests and the community was told to treat the visitors accordingly.

"This village is Islam," the sheik cautioned Akio. "The natives have adopted our faith and have joined us in Islam. The Koran is our law and we expect you to subscribe to it—in conduct if not in belief."

"Yes, sir."

The Polynesian population on Tabelbala was not a miracle. It was not even unusual. In their migrations, the Polynesians have reached every part of the Pacific and they settled where conditions were tenable and where more warlike people were not in control. Probably the Polynesians had first settled in the Loyalties but had been driven away by the stronger Melanesians. But Melanesians had never occupied Tabelbala and the Polynesians had resided there in peace for several hundreds of years.

In the village, there were 11 families of Polynesians, numbering 40 men, women and children. Happy and beautiful, they had welcomed the North Africans and had mingled their blood with them. All the children of the sheiks were half-breeds, there being no Arab women on Tabelbala. Another settlement of Polynesians was located on the northern side of the island and intercourse between the settlements was frequent and amiable.

ON behalf of his friends, Akio offered the headmen of Tabelbala the rubber raft. This was a most welcome gift as the villagers subsisted on fish in addition to the coconuts, taro and other vegetables which made up most of their diet.

The reciprocity of the Arabs was one of the most gratifying of Akio's memories. As spokesman for the Japanese, he accepted the gift of the Arabs during the feast that was held at night in the large community building. In the flare-lit hall, after the meal was over, the presentation was made to Akio.

"Our land is rich in minerals," the sheik informed the sailor, "but we have no way to mold implements. Our only product is tapa, bark cloth which our women spend many months making. It is the most precious thing we have and shall be our token of friendship to you."

Akio was humbly grateful but the method of presentation left him breathless. Into the romantic chamber, where the men sat in rows according to rank, came a lovely Polynesian maiden named Tiora. Long black hair, gleaming like silk in the firelight, covered her shoulders and hung to the small of her back. Her luminous eyes reflected the light of the flares and her provocative smile, showing bright and even teeth, flashed at the Japanese guest of honor.

To the beat of a tambourinelike percussion instrument and the reed flutes of young half-Arab men, Tiora began a dance of welcome. Swathed in layers of fine cloth which accentuated her lovely lines, the girl passed close to Akio and then mischievously spun away to glide across the room, swaying her hips in a hula.

AKIO was in a trance of delight when Tiora danced close to him and handed him the end of her scarflike garment. While he held the cloth, Tiora executed a series of spins and pirouetted across the room. Akio numbly gathered in the cloth from which the Polynesian girl was freeing herself, without taking his eyes off the dancer. The unwinding cloth bared her breasts, which were veiled from time to time by her flowing hair, and then continued to reveal her smooth, flat stomach and swaying hips. When Akio had claimed the entire bolt of material, Tiora danced in the nude before him.

"She, too, is yours," the sheik awoke the fascinated sailor.

Akio was taken by Tiora to a hut where they lived together for the rest of his stay on the island. There she gave birth to his three children, one of whom still lives, according to Akio.

Masao Yamamoto and Orri Tyoto also took wives, but Akio and his countrymen drifted apart during their stay on Tabelbala. Masao continually annoyed the other Japanese by his constant complaints of island conditions and his fear that, at any time, Americans or Free French troops would land on the island and arrest and execute him.

In their fourth year on Tabelbala, Masao cut himself badly on the sharp coral of the lagoon. The cuts turned septic and he died of the infection. It was Tyoto who fulfilled Masao's nightmare premonition of execution. He misinterpreted the easygoing ways of the islanders, taking their courtesy for servility, and assaulted the wife of a sheik's son. He was cast adrift on a makeshift raft as the tide ebbed, without water or provisions. Neither Japanese nor American records list him as surviving. He is presumed dead by the Japanese government but his place and time of death is officially the Coral Sea, May, 1942.

Akio made friends with one of the Arabs who had originally found him on the beach. Assured that the Japanese sailor was not a

Frenchman but was, instead, a friend of his people, Abu-Mezrag-Mokrani accepted the Oriental as his companion and confidant.

"That's an impressive name," Akio grinned at his friend after they had become well acquainted. "Very heroic."

"Thank you," Abu-Mezrag-Mokrani answered gravely. "It is not a family name, but my father awarded it to me in memory and honor of the great Kabyle leader he followed."

"Where did your father serve this leader?"

"In Algeria."

"How did he get to Tabelbala?"

Abu-Mezrag-Mokrani never would answer that question.

With his friend, Akio explored the island. He was amazed by the finds he made. On the low hills which formed the spine of Tabelbala, he found exposed veins of chrome which, he was sure, contained more than 70 per cent pure ore. In the same area, he discovered strains of nickel which were equally pure.

"This is a rare and valuable deposit," he told Abu-Mezrag. "There must be thousands of tons of ore under this soil. There is a great fortune here. Why don't you and your people take advantage of it?"

"We can't."

"Why not?"

"If we left Tabelbala," Abu-Mezrag said savagely, "the French would catch us and send us to the guillotine."

"Why?"

And Abu-Mezrag would not answer that question, either.

As the years slowly passed, Akio became increasingly discontent with his life on Tabelbala. He loved his wife, adored his children, enjoyed the friendship of his neighbors and the easy living which nature accorded. But he was a stranger in a strange land. He wanted to return home to Japan and again see his family, friends and familiar sights. And the vein of rich ore plagued him. He knew that he could be a very wealthy man if he could raise investment capital and exploit the deposits.

Akio made up his mind. First, he must assure himself that the war had run its course and that Japan was the victor. Of that, he had little doubt. Secondly, he must leave Tabelbala, proceed to Japan, establish himself as a living subject of the emperor and receive his honorable discharge from the Navy and raise funds to capitalize on his discovery. Then he could return to Tabelbala and his wife, freed from doubts and worry.

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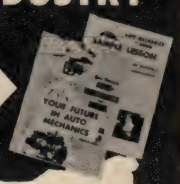

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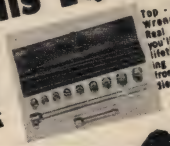

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With this in mind, he labored several months building a strong raft to take him to New Caledonia. Such a trip would offer no hazards, providing New Caledonia were occupied by Japanese Imperial troops.

He landed in the native village of Dunia on the southwest coast of New Caledonia, directly opposite from Nouméa, which lies on the west side of the island. Surprised but noncommittal natives took him to Nouméa where French authorities took him into custody until a Japanese consular agent assumed responsibility for the sailor who had disappeared almost 15 years before.

The confused Japanese diplomat, utterly disbelieving Akio, placed him under arrest until the sailor could be transported to Japan to stand trial for—well, whatever he was to stand trial for.

After Akio's mention of the Arab community on Tabelbala, the hearings in Yokohama began to go against him. At first, the board was willing to give Akio his due, both in terms of honor and money, but when he talked of Arabs and Polynesians they seriously suspected him as a brazen fraud. As Akio revealed further details of his weird adventure, this feeling changed to a strong belief that he was psychoneurotic. Finally, the court began to suspect that Akio had perpetrated some grievous crime which he sought to hide under the cloud of his fantastic story. He almost went to prison on general principles.

But aid came from an unexpected quarter. Because the "deserter" had been picked up in New Caledonia, the French colonial administration expressed a reluctant interest in the case. The Frenchman at the trial was highly displeased when the defense insisted that he be called to give expert testimony.

The lieutenant on the board decided to have some fun at Akio's expense while saving his government the back pay Akio had sued for.

"Tell me, Colonel Cote," the lieutenant smiled, "were there ever any Arabs—an Arab colony—within 20,000 miles of New Caledonia?"

"Yes, sir."

"There were Arabs in New Caledonia?" The lieutenant's smile faded.

"Hundreds of them," the Frenchman replied.

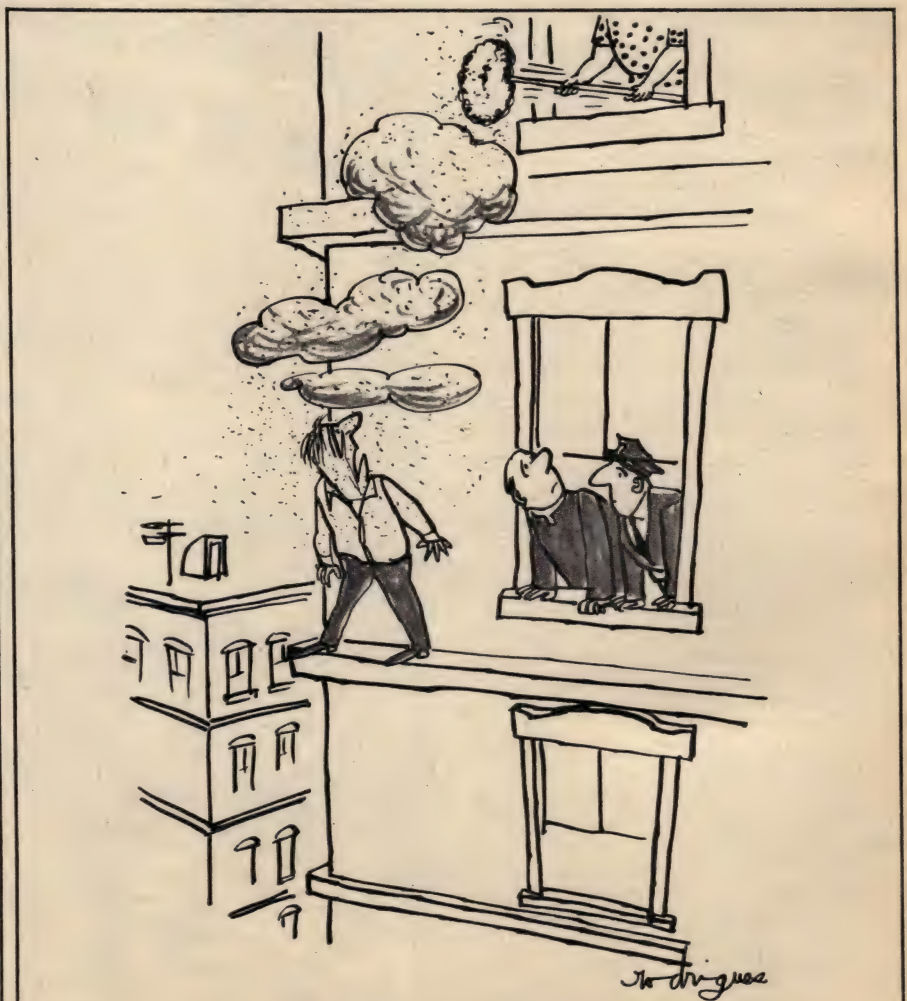
Chagrined, the lieutenant took another tack. "Is it possible that there could be a Tabelbala on an island in the vicinity of New Caledonia?"

"It is not only possible," Cote affirmed, recalling some of the statements made by Mitanabe, "but it is most likely."

With that affirmation, things began to swing around in favor of Akio Mitanabe again.

"Why, please," the senior member of the board wanted to know, "would there be colonies of Arabs in the South Seas?"

In reply to that question, an odd but logical statement of fact was entered to the benefit of Mitanabe.



"See what I mean? Everybody's against me!"

"If the Arabs which Seaman Mitanabe mentions were as old as he says," Colonel Cote recited, "it is likely that they had escaped from the old prison colony of New Caledonia. These men, in 1942, would have had to be at least 68 years old and that is possible. Today, 1957, the youngest would have to be no younger than 83."

"How can you be so specific?" the lieutenant demanded.

"The prison colony in New Caledonia, and especially that part known as Ile Nou, had many political prisoners," Colonel Cote said. "These political prisoners included many Algerians who revolted against France in 1871. The colony was discontinued in 1894 and a prisoner had to be no less than 20 years old to be sentenced to transportation."

"Mitanabe testified that these Arabs had resided on Tabelbala for 64 years," the court pointed out, "and, at the time of the statement, the year was 1942. Those men would have had to be 84 years old then."

"I am aware of that," the colonel said. "It occurs to me that in 1878, the island of New Caledonia suffered a very terrible native uprising. More than 200 settlers were killed and many plantations were destroyed. At this time, the administrators enlisted all whites, including the prisoners, to suppress the rebellion."

"So?"

"So exactly 64 years prior to Mitanabe's arrival on Tabelbala, the followers of Abu-Mezrag-Mokrani, as well as all other prisoners, were pressed into military service. In the confusion of the times, some prisoners assisted the natives. Others escaped the island and were never recaptured."

"Did you say 'Abu-Mezrag-Mokrani?'" Akio's defenders were immediately alerted.

"Yes, I did," Colonel Cote assured the board. "Abu-Mezrag-Mokrani led 20,000 Kabyle tribesmen against the French in Algeria in 1871. He was captured and transported to New Caledonia and shared a cell wtih Henri Rochefort on Ile Nou."

"These Arabs who were never recaptured," the defense asked eagerly, "could they have been the followers of Abu-Mezrag-Mokrani among whom Mitanabe lived?"

"They could have been the followers of Abu-Mezrag-Mokrani among whom Mitanabe *alleges* he lived," Cote said corrected, stressing the word "alleges."

AKIO Mitanabe was grateful for the evidence offered by the reluctant Frenchman but he was especially anxious to ask a question not related to his case. He was given permission to do so.

"What would happen to the Arabs today if they were detected by French officials?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing at all?"

"That's correct," the colonel stated. "To begin with, I doubt that there are any living survivors of the original transportees—your alleged friends would be 98 years old this year. From 1864 to 1894, 40,000 convicts were transported to New Caledonia. There has been no prison colony in that possession for 63 years." The Frenchman stressed his next statement. "And France never had a case against the descendants of the Arabs. French punishment is not hereditary."

"Then the Arabs are not refugees?" Akio pressed.

"They were all given amnesty in 1894," the Frenchman snapped testily. "Sixty-three years ago."

Akio now had another reason to return to Tabelbala. The Arabs, his friends, who lived in fear of French gendarmes, had been free men for three generations. They must be told.

Although they still believed Mitanabe to be insane, the Japanese could not prove it and he did have official records and his fingerprints to substantiate his claim to have been logically lost for 15 years. The decision was Akio's.

And he promptly confirmed the suspicions of the officers that he was psycho. He took his hard-won money and flew to New Caledonia and chartered a boat to explore the specks of land between Lifou and Mare islands. His search ended in failure and the French authorities, looking unkindly on beachcombers, required him to return to Tokyo. He again raised enough money to finance another trip to the Loyalties in search of his elusive paradise. He again failed and was returned to Tokyo.

"It is impossible that I can not locate that island," Akio cries to his smiling friends. "There is ore there, enough to make a man rich. And beautiful Polynesian girls."

"And Arabs," his acquaintances grin.

And Akio, now pointed to as an idiot and looking much too old for his 37 years, haunts the waterfront of Yokohama, trying to bum his way back to New Caledonia and his lost island while he murmurs about the lovely Polynesian who spins away from him, leaving her long tapa cloth scarf in his hands, to dance naked before him. ♦♦♦

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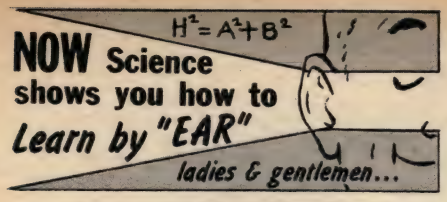

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A CIRCLE OF COFFINS FOR COMPANY C

Continued from page 17

Captain James Powell was married to the Army, and that his infantry company was his special pet. It was absolutely true that the men of his outfit looked up to him as their father. He was always available for encouragement, counsel and instruction—and he meted out fair punishment when occasion warranted.

But even with his battle-ready team, Captain Powell was gravely concerned. He didn't hold the Indian enemy in contempt as did many other Army officers—like Captain William Fetterman who had bragged around the officer's mess at Fort Phil Kearney that with 80 men he could ride through the whole Sioux nation. Fetterman had tried to do just that some months before when he led 81 troopers out of the fort to rescue a woodcutting train that was under attack by Red Cloud's warriors.

The wily Sioux strategist, who'd earned the title of the Red Napoleon of the Plains, and who led what was named the finest light cavalry in the world by foreign military observers, lured Fetterman and his command into a deadly trap that resulted in a bloody massacre.

Powell had good reason to remember the episode. He'd been assigned to command that rescue party, but Fetterman, who outranked him, insisted on taking over the job.

Now Captain Powell was on his own, knowing very well what to expect, but not when it was going to happen. He knew that Red Cloud had declared what amounted to a holy war against the white invaders. Thousands of tough, fighting warriors—Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapaho—were gathered in the Big Horn Mountains, and they'd choose the time to strike. It was Powell's job to meet the situation the best way he could, using all his military know-how to do it.

HE had a lot, having come up the hard way. He'd enlisted as a private in the 11th US Infantry in 1848, and he'd been first sergeant of Company I, First US Dragoons, with lots of Indian fighting experience under his belt, when the Civil War broke out and he was promoted to second lieutenant and transferred to the 18th Infantry. Six months later he was a first lieutenant, and on September 20, 1863, was brevetted captain for outstanding gallantry at the bloody battle of Chickamauga. He received his permanent rank as captain a year later, and was brevetted major for gallantry and marked initiative during the battle of Jonesboro, where he was badly wounded. On September 21, 1866, he was assigned to the newly formed 27th Infantry at Fort Laramie under Colonel H. B. Carrington, and placed in command of Company C.

A tall, dark-haired man with a thick black mustache, he was a "sharp" soldier with a special mark of distinction; in camp, on the post, and in the field he always wore a white shirt and a black bow tie.

At his headquarters overlooking Big Piney Creek, Powell built a fortress—a flimsy affair made up of ordinary wooden wagon boxes which the woodcutters had detached from the running gear. He had 15 of them, and he arranged them in the form of a wide oval at the highest point on the open plain between the green hills. The wagon beds were deep and afforded excellent concealment for anyone lying in them, but very little actual protection. Powell had them reinforced, bolstering the one-inch-thick planking with logs, sacks of grain—anything that would stop or turn a bullet. He placed complete wagons, running gear, body, canvas covering and all—and heavily loaded—across the two entrances to the corral to break the force of a charge at these vulnerable points. Outside the corral were the tents of the military guard and those of the woodcutting crew and civilian teamsters.

IT was the usual routine on August 2nd, Jimmy Hines thumping out reveille at daybreak, marching up and down before the row of tents followed by Jess, the dog, and watched by Captain Powell. After breakfast the wood-train crew hitched up for the daily trip back to the fort with a load of cordwood. The civilian woodcutters left for the pine grove across the creek accompanied by their soldier guard, and the picket posts along the creek were relieved.

Private Sam Gibson was in charge of the picket guards that morning. With him were Privates Jack Garret and Walt Deming. It was hot down on the creek bank and Gibson rigged a bit of shade with his poncho. He was sprawled out there, blouse unbuttoned, ammunition belt loosened, rifle ready to hand, when the alarm came. It was exactly 7:30 A.M.

Garret sighted the Indians first.

"Look, Sam!" he shouted. "My God, look!"

Many warriors on horseback were coming across the divide from the north. They were galloping in single file, naked except for breechclouts and headdresses, waving their weapons and shouting war cries. Sam Gibson sat down, adjusted his rifle sights for 700 yards and fired the first shot. The bullet struck a rock in front of the leading Indian, ricocheted off, and wounded the pony. The rider was thrown but was snatched up by another warrior.

Now the foothills to the north were alive with Indians, dismounted and on horseback. They'd appeared like swarming bees, swooping down toward the woodcutters' position, and closing in on the wood train which was

well under way for Fort Phil Kearney. A civilian teamster came panting across the Little Piney to join Gibson's group.

"They've run off the stock," he shouted, "and the rest of the men ran for the hills. Let's get the hell out of here!"

It was time to go, all right. More Indians were appearing, coming up out of the creek bottom like a flock of birds. They were all naked except for the traditional G-string and their bodies and faces were painted white, green and yellow. Some wore war bonnets. Others had a single feather in their scalplocks.

Because the little group was his responsibility, Gibson detailed himself as a rear guard while the others scurried toward the corral 1,000 yards away.

At the corral, Captain Powell was in furious but well-planned action. The wood-train guard had abandoned the wagons and were retreating toward the hills to the south, the soldiers keeping the Indians back by a well-directed fire. But it couldn't last. They were in the open. A determined charge would overwhelm them. The civilian woodcutters from the pine grove were trying hard to join the wood train. They'd have a better chance if the two groups could consolidate.

"Robertson! McQuiery!" Powell shouted to two of his sergeants. "Bring your squads—follow me!"

Out they ran, 19 of them, straight toward the milling Indians. There was no need for orders. They spread out, opened fire, attacking the Indians who were busy converging on the wagon-train detachment. What happened then was just as Powell had planned it. The Indians whirled, attacked him. The bold sortie saved the wagon-train men, the teamsters and woodcutters—at least for the moment. Powell hoped that they'd manage to get to the fort.

Now the Indians turned all their attention to Powell.

He'd gotten his two squads back behind the wagon boxes. He had 32 men, including four well-armed civilian woodcutters and teamsters. Outside, all around them, the valley swarmed with yelling fighters—thousands of them—Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapaho. And they were so sure of themselves, they'd brought their women and children along. Powell could see them, massed out of range on the surrounding hills where they constituted an audience for the terrible drama about to be played in the big amphitheater below them.

THERE were no heroics within the corral. Powell was cool. He put it to his men in blunt, straightforward fashion.

"We're fighting for our lives today," he told them. "We've rehearsed this thing time and again in our dry runs. Just remember your orders—no shooting until I give the word. That's the most important thing to remember. Take your positions."

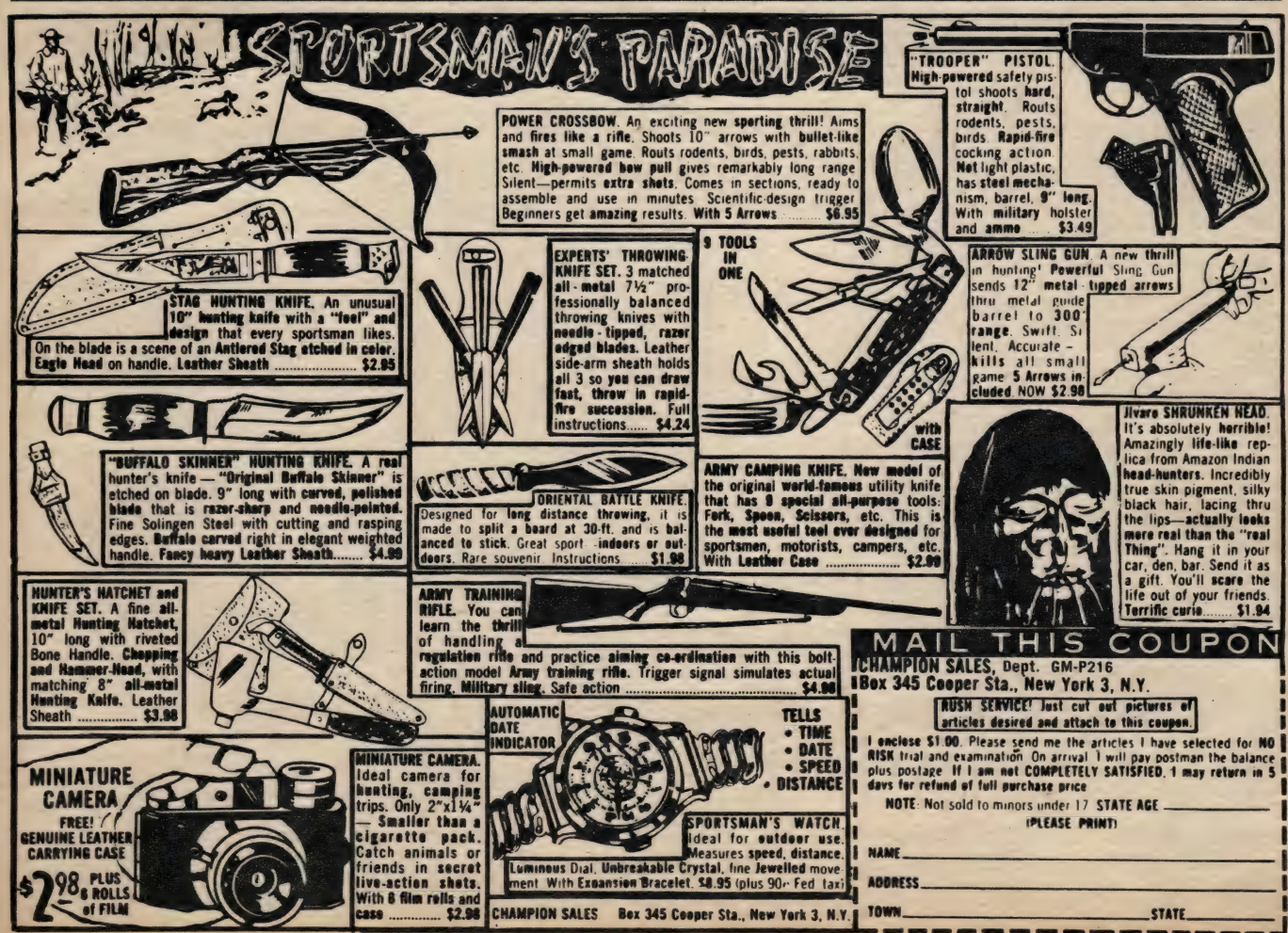
Fourteen frail wagon boxes—32 men, most of them raw recruits, two men to a wagon box. Privates Doyle and Condon, with Corporal Littmann, who was one of the company's crack shots, crouched behind barrels and sacks of feed placed between the boxes. Captain Powell, also an expert rifleman, took up his position at the corral's west end. Lieutenant Jenness, fresh from West Point, and very new to such horror as this, was at the east end. Blankets were drawn over the wagon boxes to give some protection from plunging arrow fire. The men filled their caps with rifle cartridges.

There was another bit of preparation too—a grim bit of business. Everyone inside that corral remembered what had happened to the men of Fetterman's command last December—the mutilation of the wounded; how the Indians had poured gunpowder into the ears of some soldiers and set it afire; how others had been stripped naked and then had their sexual organs slowly sawed off.

So Powell's men made ready. They removed their shoelaces, tied them together, making a loop in either end—one loop for the rifle trigger, the other secured around the big toe. That way, with rifle muzzle beneath chin, one quick jerk and there'd be no torture. Others placed revolvers close beside them.

The whole plain, all around the corral, was alive with Indians. Most of them were mounted, riding back and forth, closing in, shooting at the corral with guns and bows and arrows, first on one side, then on the other—moving in closer all the time, circling, brandishing war clubs, tomahawks and spears. Not a shot was fired from the corral.

Then came the first charge, all mounted Indians, at least 500 of them. Powell let them come within 100 yards before he gave the order to commence firing. The first volley crashed out, knocking many riders from their horses. The rest came on, whooping, shooting. They'd expected but one volley, then a pause while the defenders reloaded during which the braves could overwhelm the soldiers. But there was no pause in the firing. A steady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stream of lead poured out from the wagon boxes. The new breech-loaders were paying off. That and the fact that Powell had assigned his poorer shots as loaders for the expert riflemen, each one of whom had as many as three rifles ready to hand.

Still the Indians came on, howling, across the plain. They were mowed down—the wake of the charge was strewn with men and horses. Then the charging line split into two wings which raced around both sides of the corral, pouring in a storm of bullets and arrows. They circled again and again, but not one undefended spot did they find. They retreated out of range.

Three men of Company C were dead—Lieutenant Jenness, Privates Doyle and Haggerty. Two others were wounded. Fire arrows were smoldering in the sun-dried manure in the center of the corral space where the wagon-train mule teams were kept at night, and it was steaming hot under the August sun. There were only two small cans of water inside the corral.

Captain Powell made a quick inspection. To say that he was greeted by confident grins and/or cheery words would be the greatest lie of the century. Those men of his were cursing, grim-faced, already a bit haggard-looking and afraid. How much more could they take? he wondered. That there would be much more he was sure.

Again the Indians came galloping out—not so much yelling this time. A more determined rush than before. It was at this point that Powell saw a group of mounted Indians, all in elaborate headdresses, on a low hill to the east. That would be Red Cloud, the captain figured, at his command post.

His assumption was confirmed when he saw one of the group signaling with a mirror, and couriers riding hell-for-leather toward the depression that formed Big Piney Valley. What now? he wondered anxiously.

Again the attackers were beaten off with great loss. But this time they'd approached much closer—near enough to hurl a number of spears into the wagon-box fort. This time their retreat was but a momentary thing. Just beyond range of the corral they turned, reformed, and came storming in again—making feints here and there, trying to confuse the defenders.

The line of tents in front of the corral had been left standing all this time, and the soldiers had simply fired through the spaces between them. But they had to come down for obvious reasons. Powell gave the order, and Private Grady yelled at young Sam Gibson: "Come on, kid!" and jumped from his wagon box.

The two ran out, slashing at the tents' guy ropes while bullets zipped around them, and arrows plunked into the ground. They managed to wreck most of the tents before First Sergeant Hoover yelled at them to come back inside.

TEARING down those tents made for a better view. The soldiers' controlled firing was destructive. Again the attack was barely beaten off.

But the Indians gave the men no rest. They kept making false charges, whooping horrible war cries, riding in, darting away in a wonderful exhibition of horsemanship. Inside the corral everyone was thirsty now. Men kept asking for water. There were two full cans under a wagon outside the enclosure. Again, Gibson and Grady crawled out to get them. But they found the containers shot full of holes. The precious fluid had leaked out.

The meaning of the mirror signals and the galloping couriers Captain Powell had observed was evident now. Concealed under the brow of a ridge and in the high grass at its top, unmounted Indians had crawled in to close rifle range of the corral and there they settled down to sniping tactics. But they fired high, shattering the tops of the thin wagon boxes into splinters. The defenders only returned this fire when they had a clear target. There were few misses.

The suspense of the soldiers was a terrible

"Hello, Mom. I got the job!"

thing. They coughed as the rancid smoke from the burning manure settled down over the corral in the hot, still air, they sweltered in the heat of the wagon boxes with their blanket covering—always straining their eyes for a sight of a relief force from Fort Phil Kearney, wondering if any of the wood-train men had succeeded in getting through to carry the word of the situation.

There were more mirror signals from Red Cloud's command post as Captain Powell made another quick inspection of the corral. There wasn't much he could do; words of encouragement he didn't believe in himself, a slap on the back and words of praise for those fighters of his may have helped a little, but no one was fooled. What was going on out there on the plain, along the foothills, didn't give them very much hope.

Something new was happening. The main body of Indians—about 2,000—had gathered around the hill where Red Cloud sat on his horse, holding his rifle high above his head. He, or some other chief, was shouting at them. The men of Company C could plainly hear the bull-bellowing voice.

Presently the large group divided, part of them riding down into the Big Piney Valley out of sight. Another group rode out on the plain, moving very slowly toward the silent corral. Now they halted, their ponies pawing the ground.

It was 2:45 P.M.—after almost eight hours of continuous combat—when the soldiers heard a humming sound, apparently of many voices, below them in the Big Piney Valley and out of view. It was a horrifying sound—weird, inhuman.

Corporal Littmann peered across his salt-barrel barricade, then glanced at Captain Powell and First Sergeant Hoover who were crouched beside him.

"Was ist das?" he demanded, his English forgotten for the moment.

Hoover answered him:

"Squaws wailing over the dead warriors, I guess," he said. Then he stiffened, glancing sharply toward the ridge where the Indians had established their skirmish line. "By God! They've stopped shooting!" he exclaimed.

The men in the wagon boxes had noted the cessation too. Two of them stood up, pushing the blankets aside, to see what was going on.

"Get down! Get down!" Powell shouted at them.

There was no sound now but that awful humming chanting, that grew in volume—coming nearer and nearer—now directly west of the corral. The Indians far off to the south and east were moving in very slowly, brandishing their spears, war clubs and rifles, giving out an occasional war cry. The Indian skirmish line along the edge of the ridge seemed to be just sitting there waiting for something to happen.

Captain Powell felt the goose pimples pop out all over him despite the heat. He had 26 effectives and the ammunition was running low. Human beings can only take so much, no matter how good a team they are, or how tough. Someone was sobbing nearby.

"Oh, my God! Oh, my God!"

"Put a stop to that, Sergeant," Powell told Hoover.

Hoover hadn't crawled a foot when a wild yell from the corral's west side stopped him dead.

"Here they come!"

It was a sight none of them ever forgot—a blood-chilling sight. They saw the naked bodies of hundreds upon hundreds of painted Indians come swarming up the ravine about 90 yards to the west of the corral. They were all on foot, in a wedge-shaped V-formation. They broke into a run as they came into view. In the lead was a chief in a gorgeous war bonnet. Captain Powell recognized him as Red Cloud's nephew, whom he'd met during the peace talks at Fort Laramie.

"Commence firing," Powell shouted, and shot Red Cloud's nephew through the head.

Company C's first volley took a terrible toll of the closely-packed attackers. The Indians didn't waver. On they came, noisy fighters now, very brave and determined. The

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stream of lead from the wagon boxes poured into them—a continuous rattle of rifle fire. They plunged into it, yelling, prancing, shooting. The mounted Indians on the plain were in motion now, circling, their war cries bouncing back from the green hills around the plain. The soldiers' fire never slowed. The attackers were so close now that some of the heavy .50 caliber bullets must have passed through several bodies. They swarmed in so close that the defenders could see the whites of their eyes.

Private Jim Condon jumped to his feet behind his grain-sack barricade to get a better shot.

"Come on, you s.o.b.s!" he screamed. "Come on! Come and get it!"

Powell yelled at him to keep down.

The Indians were so close that it seemed nothing could stop them from swarming over the slim barricade and into the corral. But the fast accurate fire of the men of Company C was coolly delivered—good marksmanship, guts and good discipline did it—that and teamwork, four things which, when added up, spell battle-readiness in capital letters.

SUDDENLY the Indians broke and fled. The hundreds of mounted warriors out in the plain didn't charge. They circled, shouting, waving their weapons. As the dismounted attackers scurried across the open ground, the men of Company C urged them on their way with well-aimed fire.

This was the sixth furious charge Red Cloud's legions made that day. And it was the last. Their main business after that was the recovery of their dead and wounded, always a high point of honor among Indians. The skirmish line along the ridge kept up a covering fire on the corral to protect the gallant men who crawled and rode out to bring in the bodies and the wounded. Company C conserved ammunition.

Suddenly the Indians on top of the ridge started down the steep incline into Big Piney Valley by twos, threes and fours. Company C's best shots drew down on them to hurry them along.

"What now, Captain?" First Sergeant Hoover asked. He shook his head. "I don't think we can take another charge."

Powell shrugged. He didn't think so either, but he wouldn't admit it.

"We'll give it a damn good try, Sergeant," he replied. "Tell the men——"

"Hey!" A trooper's voice interupted. "Listen! Did you hear that? Sounded like cannon fire."

"Cease firing," Captain Powell commanded.

They all strained their ears, and peered off toward Fort Phil Kearney. And then they saw it—a long thin line of blue uniforms coming over the hill. That was the moment when the rescue party under Major John E. Smith, 27th Infantry, let go with a second shot from a howitzer, the shell bursting above the crowd of retreating Indians.

Red Cloud's thousands were disappearing into the woods, scampering off in all directions. The men in the wagon boxes sprang to their feet shouting.

"Here they come—here they come!" They threw their caps into the air, hugged one another. Some cried. Others laughed. Jess, the mascot, who'd been tied up in a wagon box all that horrible day, came bounding out, barking and dashing madly all around the corral. Young Jimmy Hines' first move was to recover his precious drum.

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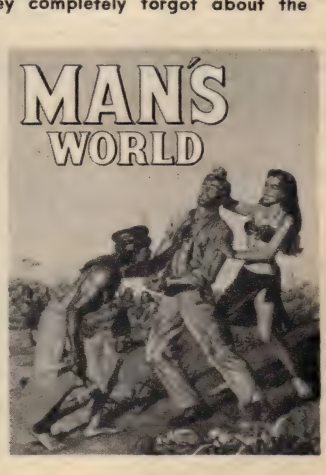

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Captain Powell ordered his men back into the wagon boxes. The Indians might try one more attack before the relief troops could arrive. So Company C sat there, rifles ready, watching Major Smith's men approach, while the boom of the blessed howitzer was the sweetest sound any of them had ever heard. Smith's artillerymen kept throwing explosive shells into the mass of Indians, and Red Cloud's force was scattering rapidly.

The main body of rescuers came into view, marching in front of a small wagon train of eight six-mule teams and two horse-drawn ambulances.

Now the men of Company C were out in the open, waving their rifles, shouting at well-known comrades. Captain Powell strode out, rifle in the crook of his arm. Gravely, he saluted Major Smith.

"Nice to see you, sir," Powell greeted him with a crooked smile. "My God! you'll never know just how nice it is!"

Fort Phil Kearney's post surgeon, Doctor Samuel M. Horton, was with the rescuers. His first question was "Who's wounded? Who's dead?"

There were three wounded, two soldiers and one civilian teamster. Three dead. Doctor Horton took care of the casualties first. Then, after a few brief words with Captain Powell, he unlimbered a small keg of whiskey from an ambulance and all the men of Company C had a good stiff drink.

The bodies of Lieutenant Jenness and Privates Doyle and Haggerty were placed in one ambulance, the wounded men in the other, and Company C packed up for the march back to the fort. When they arrived at the top of the big hill east of the corral they looked back. They could see a line of Indian ponies, three and four deep, fully a quarter of a mile long. They were carrying off their dead and wounded.

At the main gate of Fort Phil Kearney, Colonel Carrington, the regimental commander, was waiting. He halted Company C, removing his hat in deference to the dead.

Captain Powell called his men to attention.

"I want to commend all of you for this victory over such terrible odds," Carrington said. "It is my intention to recommend every one of you for the Congressional Medal of Honor for your bravery today."

The recommendation was made out and submitted but, for some reason known only to the War Department, none of the men ever received the decoration. Captain Powell was given the rank of brevet lieutenant colonel. He was retired in 1868 for physical disability due to the wounds he'd received at the Battle of Jonesboro in 1864. He died in 1893.

THE losses sustained by Red Cloud's forces during the Wagon Box Fight were never determined exactly. In his official report on the action, Captain Powell estimated them at about 300 killed and wounded. Other, unofficial, reports figure on about 800. Red Cloud himself, some years later, said he went into the fight with a little over 3,000 warriors and came out with half of them. He added:

"It was a big fight. The long swords fought as I have never seen them fight before or since. My warriors were as numerous as blades of grass. I went in with many. I lost over half. The long swords shot true to the mark. My warriors never fought again." ♦♦♦

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SINGSONG GIRLS OF STOCKADE 9

Continued from page 24

played that morning. Whatever it was, was pretty weird.

Then Lieutenant Sung gave the order: "About face!"

Even Gaffke's mouth dropped like the scoop of a steam shovel; for there coming out of the officers' quarters, were five of the lushest Eurasian lovelies ever to serve the cause of the Peoples' Republic. And they weren't dressed in padded coats either. Not by a long shot. They had furs, jackets and stoles, and underneath these they wore sleek tight-fitting silk that shimmered over every curve.

Smiling, they stepped down from the gallery surrounding the officers' barracks, the crisp silk swishing maddeningly, the deep slits in the skirts giving glimpses of their dimpled knees.

THAT was it. That was the new psychological approach that had brought on Li Po's "gout." Probably not new really, but new for the prisoners in Stockade Nine, on whom almost everything else had been tried —and failed.

Next, while the girls lounged about, the lieutenant got up on his soapbox and started preaching away about the thoughtfulness of the People's Republic.

The long and short of it was that "as a reward for their co-operation (future tense), the People's Republic had deigned to let these 'representatives' make the prisoner's stay more pleasant." They were, said Sung, to give sympathetic and motherly advice, write letters and so on.

That last part got almost as big a laugh as the bit about co-operation, because the camp had already worn out two commanders, and it was pretty obvious that the five girls weren't going to give any motherly advice. They just weren't built for it—as they damn well knew.

The men were dismissed then to their quarters for chow—or slops, is it was affectionately called. At 1100 hours the five "sisters" were to make another appearance.

But for the five men of Hut 13 there was little chance to look over the wares. Ever since the initial jolt, Gaffke had been fidgeting as if he were having trouble holding water. When the dismissal came, he herded them roughly back to the hut.

The rangy Gaffke had spent nearly 15 years in the Far East, having been in the vanguard of the South Pacific campaign. After the war, he had returned as a merchant seaman, working out of practically every port in the Orient and under any flag that was handy. Somewhere along the way he had gotten married, to a Chinese, the rumors were. It had been some romance. But that was only hearsay too. The Reds, the war and all, had broken that up; he never spoke of it himself. His eyebrows had a way of rising whenever he had an idea or got excited. And they looked now as though they were crawling clear off his head.

Corcoran started complaining, but Gaffke cut him short.

"What've we been trying to do for the past three months?" he barked, glaring at each of the other five.

"Bust out," Campbell's rich, low voice broke the silence.

"And what's our big problem?"

"To make our contact again," Corcoran answered suspiciously.

"Now, what would you say . . ." Gaffke paused to look slowly at each of them again, "what would you say if I told you we've got one?"

For a moment they stared at him blankly. Then comprehension seeped through.

"Not the girls?" Donaldson guessed woodenly.

Grimly, Gaffke nodded. "Yes, the girls," he mimicked. "So sit tight, fellas. They'll come to us."

It turned out that the leader of the crew of "sisters" was a friend, a business friend, of course, of Gaffke's. That's how he put it. She'd been number one girl in one of the plushest houses in the East, before being "rehabilitated" by the Commies. And Gaffke had caught her eye.

Stockade Nine was situated near the bank of a small tributary. A few miles upstream, they knew, was a small village—knew because it was the villagers who supplied the place with provisions.

Somehow Gaffke had gotten in touch with one Liu Tu, a small businessman who did ferrying along the river.

Formerly the villagers had been allowed to trade with the prisoners. Commander Li Po had stopped that; first, because it demoralized the enlisted men as well as the officers by depriving them of what they considered their well-earned graft, an old gook tradition; and second, because there had been five escapes in the eight months preceding the arrival of Li Po.

Except for necessities, most of which were brought out in carts, the village itself was strictly out of bounds. The villagers now were not allowed within 200 yards of the encampment. They'd come up in their creaking wagons, be ordered to halt and unload, with the guards' guns trained on them. Then a detail of troops would be sent out to haul the stuff the rest of the way. But not until the villagers had retired out of sight.

And all of this was with good reason. All five of those breakouts had been engineered with the help of old Liu Tu, who had some grudge—what, it never was found out—against the Commies.

But Li Po had stopped all that. Only the initial contact had been made. For days the five men had racked their brains to find a way to contact Liu Tu once again.

And now, from a quarter least expected, it seemed their prayers had been answered. But there were to be complications—complications aplenty.

First off, nobody seemed to know what the five girls were actually supposed to do. There were a lot of ideas. One look at the other prisoners' hungry eyes told what they had in mind. But *that* seemed pretty remote. As it turned out, the gap-toothed Lieutenant Sung had some ideas too, perhaps not so remote but just as much of a pipe dream. For the time being, though, Hut 13, like the rest of the stockade, could only watch and wait.

Immediately after that initial appetizer, the girls trooped back to their quarters, Sung following. He'd hardly closed the door behind himself when he was out again. Something had happened that he wasn't pleased about.

Stepping briskly down the steps, he shouted a few guttural orders. Instantly his platoon of personal butcherboys lined up like a row of wooden soldiers. That weird trumpet blasted again, and the prisoners came crawling out of the huts to stand at attention. Then the compound gate was opened and Sung came through.

Their chatter ceased now, as Sung strolled down the alleyway formed by the double row of huts. From time to time he would pause, purse his lips contemptuously, then give a curt jerk of his head. The butcherboys would shout, and a prisoner would be hustled out of line. Some kind of detail was being formed.

Of the five men in Hut 13, it was Corcoran who got picked. His muttered complaint earned him a rifle butt in the ribs. The irascible little Irishman had been at it most of the night in the tunnel. Finally some 30 or 40 men had been drawn out. They were led out to the far end of the compound and put to work with pick and shovel.

BY night the thing had started to take shape. The third day they finished it—a kind of earthenwork grandstand. But that wasn't clear until Sung had returned to place the bunting himself. The other work had been under the direction of Sergeant Quoin Lu. Meanwhile, the girls had kept themselves strictly under wraps.

But that wasn't the only complication. Hut 13's own work project had come to an abrupt standstill that first night. Campbell, the fifth man, had been down in the tunnel for a couple of hours. Suddenly his head popped up.

"We done it," he said flatly to no one in particular. They had. The tunnel had run smack into the abutment of the bridge over the river, some 20 yards wide of the nearest shrubbery. They couldn't move any farther until the next step was taken care of—the contact with Liu Tu. But that seemed impossible.

Each morning Gaffke would station himself in the doorway. He would squat down on his heels like an Indian beggar, picking listlessly at his beard. His face would be raised toward the officers' quarters. He would not move.

On the second day Corcoran approached him. "I been figurin' . . ." he began. He was always figuring. Corcoran wasn't the kind of man who could take being left out of anything; Gaffke's secretiveness was a thorn

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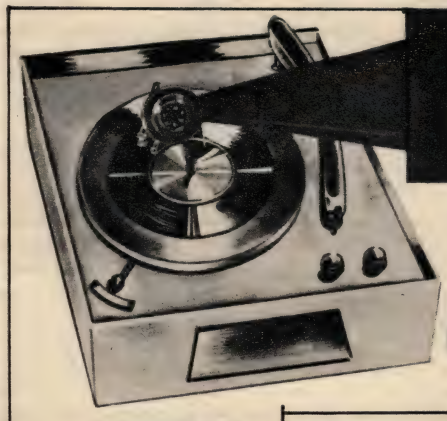

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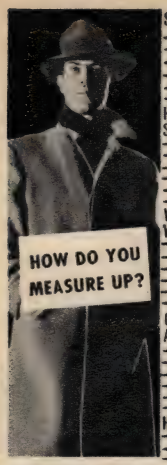

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in his side. "I been thinkin', what if you only think she saw you?"

"You figure too much," Gaffke snapped without looking up. He seemed concerned with nothing but that bolted doorway.

"She might not have recognized you," Corcoran snarled back, indicating the beard with a sneer.

Gaffke made a flickering gesture with the back of his hand as though to chase away a fly. He was used to Corcoran.

"Maybe, if you'd . . ." Donaldson started to suggest that they try something else. He'd been squatting some 20 yards away, but apparently had heard every word. The kid stopped though. He had seen something in Gaffke's eyes which Corcoran hadn't, and which he didn't understand until much later.

"Beat it, Dumbo," Gaffke jeered. The kid turned away.

Then Gaffke turned at last to Corcoran. "The day I shave," he said, biting his words, "will be the day we have a funeral around here . . ."

"And it won't be yours or mine," Corcoran finished. He had heard it often. It was common knowledge that Gaffke's beard was the source of undeclared war between him and Lieutenant Sung.

"But . . ." Corcoran started his parting wisecrack. He never finished it, for just then they heard a door slam shut, and turned in time to see a swirl of silk inside the screen of the officers' barracks beyond the barbed wire.

As suddenly as it had tensed, Gaffke's jaw relaxed. He looked wearily from Corcoran to Donaldson, who had stepped nearer. "They'll come to us," he said. "We got an ace."

The kid blinked.

"Campbell," muttered Gaffke, pointing over his shoulder to the hut where Campbell was sacked out.

Corcoran's frown changed to a slow grin. Gaffke was right. Campbell was the only Negro in the camp.

"They'll come to us, kid," Gaffke repeated pointlessly. "Sung will see to that."

But so far they hadn't. The "sisters" would make two appearances a day, one in the forenoon, the other just about sunset. Sometimes they would only stroll, twirling their parasols coquettishly, to and fro outside the fence which separated the stockade proper from the Commie quarters. At other times they even entered the stockade, where they would walk confidently from group to group of the GIs who seemed strangely shy. Clearly they knew their way around men. Besides, each of them had a brace of Commie guards. They kept clear of the huts though, sticking to the open exercise area.

Hut 13 never did get to find out what kind of advice they were dishing out. Gaffke kept them too close to quarters. Corcoran did a lot of carping about it—but to no avail. Gaffke wouldn't budge. He just sat there staring at their barracks, a peculiar dreamy expression on his bearded face, as he waited for a glimpse of the tall, lissome number one girl.

Then, the third day, things began to happen. The grandstand had been completed. There was to be some kind of program that night. During the past couple of days the grub had been almost fit to eat. The prisoners were restless. This wasn't all for nothing, and they knew it. Someone was going to have to pay, and the men had a pretty good idea who it was going to be.

THAT morning the girls made no appearance. The other GIs milled about in the open area. Then, just after noon, the door of the officers' quarters was flung open. A sigh of relief seemed to pass through the camp as the number one girl steppd smartly down the steps, followed by Sung and an entourage of other minor officers. Then the gate was swung open and they strode into the compound—straight to Hut 13.

Gaffke didn't move. He didn't even look up until their shadows fell across the doorway. The rest of the men remained standing some 15 to 20 feet away. That is, all except Campbell, who, at Gaffke's orders, was lying inside.

Sung shouted a command. Two of the butcherboys stepped forward to prod the big man to his feet. But the woman gestured impatiently. They stopped—looked at Sung. The lieutenant slapped his needle-tipped, Malacca interrogation wand impatiently against his thigh; the sun glinted

"Then it's agreed—odd man stays."

off its heavy brass knob. He nodded at last, and the two guards stepped off.

The men of Hut 13 leaned forward to watch, fascinated; it was, they suddenly realized, their first good close-up. Why, they didn't even know her name.

Then she motioned them all back out of hearing range. For a moment it seemed that Sung would balk. Finally he turned, barked an order, and stepped back.

Then she moved forward and spoke, his name perhaps, because Gaffke's head jerked up suddenly. But it was too quiet for anyone to hear. Donaldson was the only one in position to see them both. His face was a mask of attention. To the kid, though, it was clear that their former relationship had been one of more than mere business. Gaffke wasn't exactly the kind of hard-case he'd led them to believe, either.

For several minutes they spoke, their lips moving rapidly, while their faces maintained a fixed expressionlessness. Meanwhile the Commies fidgeted, disinterested and impatient. At last Gaffke turned and shouted back into the hut. Another second and Campbell came out. He was holding his stomach as though ill. He was faking, of course.

The mounting tension of the men of Hut 13 relaxed. Sung stepped forward immediately, and prodded the gangling Campbell. Satisfied finally, he shrugged, then growled something to Gaffke. Gaffke nodded.

After that the entourage quickly reformed. The party about-faced and walked quickly out of the compound. It had been some production.

It wasn't until early evening that Gaffke finally gave them his clipped version of what had taken place.

"Mei N'ong will take care of the contact," he said. They would have to leave that completely up to her: getting the prearranged signal through to Liu Tu.

Later that night there was to be a rally which he and Campbell were to take part in. While it was going on the rest of them were to complete the tunnel. That done, Donaldson was to double back to the officers' quarters. Gaffke assured him it would not be patrolled. The kid was to go in through the rear entrance, which would be unlocked.

"To your left," Gaffke whispered, "as you enter, there'll be a closet. Right inside'll be a package. Get it and bring it back."

Donaldson waited for him to go on. But that was it; that was his job.

When they had been briefed once again, Gaffke seemed to pause as though he had something more to say, almost as if he had something to confess. But he must have thought better of it.

"Got that?" he grunted once again.

They all nodded, then walked out into the exercise area.

"I been figurin', kid," Corcoran said, when they were outside. "He was going to say something more in there, wasn't he? What was it?"

Donaldson shrugged.

"Fer chrissake, what is it with you?" Corcoran snarled. "I know you ain't afraid of'm. What then?" The kid had gone through the grand tour in the interrogation chambers. He'd gotten the full treatment. There was little question of his being one to avoid physical punishment.

"Let's just say I like him, O.K.?" Donaldson answered.

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"With all the crud he gives you—Dumbo?" Corcoran sneered. It was something he couldn't figure out, so he didn't believe it.

"What crud?" Donaldson answered, but turned and walked away before the puzzled Corcoran could reply.

By early evening things were ready to roll. Gaffke signaled the big Negro, and together the two strolled easily through the door. The others, Alvarez, Corcoran, and Donaldson, were to wait half an hour longer before proceeding. In the hut's half-light Alvarez could see Corcoran's face working. The Irishman was still trying to figure things out. The kid, too, seemed puzzled. Alvarez wondered what the purpose of Donaldson's special errand was. But, like the others, he said nothing; he rarely spoke.

When it was completely dark they set to work. The searchlights had been relocated to play on the platform. At least there would be no trouble from them. In less than half an hour Alvarez and Corcoran had pushed the tunnel through.

Meanwhile, at the other end, Donaldson could feel himself growing jumpy. Outside he could hear the rumble of voices from around the bunting-draped grandstand. What if a roll call were taken? There would be no way of explaining their absence. The Reds would know something was up.

"All set," Alvarez' head had popped through the opening. Donaldson jumped back, startled. That was his cue. Apprehensively he peered about as the other two crawled out. Then, his heart pounding, the kid wormed down into the tunnel. Several minutes later he cleared the other end. The girls were doing their job well. The coast was clear. Half-crawling, half-running. Donaldson circled around the darkened lower end of the compound.

In 20 minutes he was back. Halfway out of the tunnel, his body tensed.

"I hear something," he whispered. A few seconds passed. Then the others heard it too—the heavy sound of approaching feet. It stopped outside the hut. They heard a low moan followed by the shrill giggle of Sergeant Quoin Lu. Then a body came hurtling through the doorway.

They looked at Gaffke's battered face and swollen hands. Blood was oozing through his shirt from innumerable small wounds made by Sung's interrogation wand.

". . . That'll be the day . . . we have a funeral around . . . here," the bleeding hulk moaned drunkenly.

"Do what you can with him," Corcoran whispered to Alvarez; then he turned to the kid. "Now let's open that package."

INSIDE was a silk kimono, a large one in which were wrapped five .45 automatics and a small, chrome-plated .25. That gave it away—that and the razor and sliver of soap.

"Well, I'll be goddammed," Corcoran breathed incredulously. "He was gonna get the lieutenant. But what's this for?" He picked up the .25 and looked at Donaldson.

"It's Mei N'ong's," the kid answered. "She's coming with us."

"Is?" repeated Corcoran.

"Is!" It was Alvarez. He was standing now and he wasn't smiling.

"Fer chrissake . . ." The words died in Corcoran's throat. It was the cleanest knockout the kid had ever seen. Alvarez' fist seemed to come out of nowhere. The next moment Corcoran lay crumpled on the floor, his jaw sagging open, a thin trickle of blood running across his cheek.

"O.K., kid, get going," Alvarez snapped. "I'll take care of these two."

Donaldson had already stuffed the kimono under his shirt. Behind him, as he entered the tunnel, he could hear Corcoran coming to. Then his body muffled the sound. He had a date with Sung to keep for Gaffke, and he didn't have much time.

A few minutes later Alvarez and Corcoran followed. As yet, Campbell hadn't returned. Gaffke was still groggy. They had to drag him through. Finally they made it. For a few minutes they huddled beneath the bridge. Behind them the festivities continued. The rice wine must have been broken out, for the celibate People's Army were living it up that night.

Once some troops marched across the bridge. Corcoran had to hold Gaffke's mouth to silence his moaning. A couple teeth came away in his hand. He held his own breath. What if they were to see the hole at the base of the bridge? But at last the troops were out of hearing range, and they could breathe easily once more.

MEANWHILE Donaldson had re-entered the barracks. Down the hall a shaft of light poked out from a partly open door.

Mei N'ong looked up in alarm as he entered. With a gesture he silenced her.

"You must go to him, quickly," he whispered. With a single glance she measured his slight physique.

"This, you will need," she said, slipping a long stiletto into his hand.

"And you," he replied, giving her the .25.

After she had left, Donaldson quickly turned off all but one of the lights. Pulling the kimono about himself, he stretched out on the couch to wait, his back to the door.

Beneath the bridge the minutes ticked by slowly. At last, from the tunnel they could hear Campbell's grunts as he struggled through. Then suddenly from above they heard another sound, a rustling. Their bodies stiffened, then relaxed. It was her—Mei N'ong. Together the two crept under the bridge.

Each glanced around briefly, then went to the injured man. For a few minutes longer they waited. They were to float a quarter of a mile downstream to a place where it turned and shrubbery lined the bank. There was no more time to wait.

Mei N'ong made the first move. Rising slowly she began to strip off her kimono. It was all she had on. In the dark, all they could make out was her silhouette. That was enough, more than enough. Corcoran let out a slow sigh. Alvarez could only stare, his lips parted. It'd been a long time, too long perhaps.

The river was black as death that night; there wasn't a ripple on its glassy surface. In a few minutes though, the moon would top the distant hills. They couldn't wait any longer. Once the moon came out they'd be trapped there under the bridge. They would have to make a dash for it then.

Easily she stepped into the water. The others followed suit. Campbell bringing Gaffke. The water was cold, icy cold, but after the first shock it didn't matter. They let the current carry them, making the bend without being spotted

Things had gone well so far. They had only begun wringing out their clothes when Campbell caught sight of the ferryboat. It was still beyond the bridge. The high banks there shielded its low silhouette from sight of the camp. They could only pray that no one crossed that bridge. Hours seemed to pass as it slipped slowly nearer.

"Where's Donaldson?" Corcoran asked suddenly. The water had finished reviving him; but he seemed to have forgotten what had happened. His voice came quiet and even; he wasn't complaining now.

"He'll be here," Alvarez answered uncertainly.

Then the boat pulled alongside. There was no sign of a crew. It was pretty spooky. At last a rope was flung out; a low whistle followed. Still no sign of a crew. Campbell caught the line and pulled the ferry close to the bank. The others looked around apprehensively. There was still no sign of the kid.

Another low whistle came from the boat. Mei N'ong was closest. For a moment she looked back toward the camp. At last she tore her eyes away and took the proffered hand. She stepped gingerly onto the deck.

"Maybe he'll still make it," Corcoran whispered hopefully. He seemed truly sorry, as he looked at each of them in turn. No one answered. They'd been almost too lucky already.

The men knew they couldn't wait much longer. Already faint flecks of gold were showing on the surface of the water. The moon had risen now and bathed that open stretch of river with a phosphorescent glow which outlined every bit of floating debris in sharp relief.

The bearded old man in the bow signaled. Silently the ferry pushed off. They were leaving without Donaldson.

OR so they thought—mistakenly though because just then there came a splashing alongside. Then something was rocking the ferry; finally a dim shape came clambering over the side. The helmsman drew back the large, cleaver-shaped knife he held. Liu Tu stopped him.

"It's the kid; he made it," whispered Corcoran.

"Dumbo," muttered Gaffke, who was coming around. Then Donaldson was bending over him with the rest of them.

"Gaffke," he whispered.

"Yeah," the big fellow answered weakly.

"I got you something." He held up the razor; it glinted in the moonlight.

Gaffke reached out for it slowly. Donaldson pulled it back and tossed it overboard.

"You won't need it," he said. "I got you something else instead." He placed it in Gaffke's outstretched hand. It was something they all recognized—the wand of Lieutenant Sung.

"Thanks . . . Donaldson," Gaffke muttered. He grinned up at the kid. It was the first time he had called him that.

It was late now and they still had a long way to go that night. From the prow Liu Tu signaled. He led them to the cleverly concealed compartments where they were to lie cramped for the next eight hours.

The next morning the six were let out within sight of the ocean, on a desolate stretch of the river. They spent the day hidden in a small cave, stocked with provisions and a small rubber raft. In the evening they paddled slowly out to sea. Right on time, and almost under them, the sub surfaced. They were taken aboard; the escape from Stockade Nine was completed.

But that night, Corcoran and Donaldson lying there together under the deck, went wearily over it all. Gradually, everything fell into place: Gaffke's edginess, the looks that had passed between him and Mei N'ong, the appointment with Sung that Gaffke had planned to keep with her—his wife—but which Donaldson had kept for him—the very necessity for all those things.

Sure, the Reds had split them apart, but in the end had brought them back together with a venegeance. "They must have a lot to talk over," Corcoran groaned sleepily. They listened but didn't hear a sound. "My ears ain't any good if I can't see," answered Donaldson. "It's the lips I read, you know."

"I wonder, what d'ya think he's doing right now?"

"Shut up!" Donaldson growled.

For once Corcoran had no comeback. He closed his mouth tight and turned over on his side to dream. ♦♦♦

"If you don't stop following me around, I'm calling a policeman."

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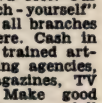

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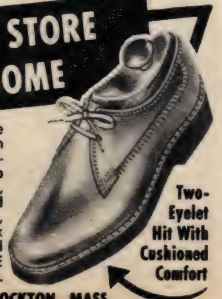

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THE DESPERATE CROSSING OF CAPTAIN INCH

Continued from page 35

the fantail on the port side. They clung to it tenaciously as though this were a plot of earth, and here they expected to go to their final rest.

Shortly after six P.M. Pennington received a dramatic message in response to his skipper's call for a tanker. It was from Captain Charles Harwood of the Anglo-American tanker *Narragansett,* a night's steaming distance away. However, he promised:

"Will come with the milk in the morning."

This optimistic spontaneity had a cheering effect on Captain Inch's spirits, but he knew help would be too late.

Darkness fell, stabbed only by tongues of flame from the blazing ship. Inch radioed:

"Cannot something be done to help us? We must abandon ship. Her plates are buckling. Stand close as I may have to jump for it."

Somehow, he stuck to his ship.

In America, Thursday was also nearing its end. The A's had won the third game of the Series by a score of 8-2 before a capacity crowd of 35,000. President Wilson had reviewed the cavalry. In Portland, Maine, Mrs. Vance Cheney had unburdened herself of her no doubt important message on right living and right thinking.

And on the *Volturno,* Second Officer Lloyd decided to demonstrate to the circling rescue fleet that a boat *could* navigate this North Atlantic nightmare. Though burned and half-crippled from his fall, he commanded a small gig with three crewmen. He put out into the darkness, using only running lights for identification, and steering by the searchlights of the other ships.

In 45 minutes he had done the impossible. Half-filled with icy sea water, his boat came alongside the *Grosser Kurfuerst* and was hauled up. All four men were safe. They were taken below decks, where warmth, German beer and hearty congratulations awaited them.

Even so, the captains of the waiting ships —now joined by the *Devonian* and *La Touraine*—did not think it prudent to attempt to move passengers off the *Volturno* until morning.

About nine P.M., as Captain Barr himself was to record the scene:

". . . When darkness was at its blackest, the flames burst through amidships of the *Volturno* from her engine room and coal bunkers. As the fire lighted up the ship there came an explosion which sent into the air burning wreckage like the flight of rockets. It lit the surrounding ships."

Yet, those who still lived aboard the *Volturno* clung to their uncertain bit of steel. The rabbi prayed. Mothers held their babies. Strong men were tormented with a sense of frustration. What could they do?

At midnight, the *Grosser Kurfuerst* could not watch the spectacle any longer. A group of hardy seamen from Kiel stripped to their undershirts—so as not to be encumbered if they were swept overboard—and manned a lifeboat.

They pulled away into the darkness.

MEANWHILE the *Narragansett* was taking the seas like a half-submerged submarine. No one could stand up on her pipe-latticed decks. Captain Harwood, refusing to sleep, was by the helm, hanging onto an upright for support and peering into the blackness of the Atlantic night.

He confided to his mate on watch that he'd be at his destination in the morning as promised with the "milk" if he had to "crack every frame in the ship!" From the roar which every head-on sea made in the forecastle, his seamen could believe him.

Captain Inch, about two A.M., sent this despairing entreaty dot-dashing through the air:

"For God's sake, do something. . . !"

As if in derisive answer, a new explosion tore the radio mast from the *Volturno*; it was the end of her transmission.

The boat from the *Grosser Kurfuerst* circled the fiercely blazing steamer as its officer in charge shouted to the passengers to jump.

"Schnell! Schnell!" he called in German.

But no one obeyed—no one except Pennington, the wireless operator who now had no further duties to perform. After his nightmares, he was sure he would die, although he felt a bitter satisfaction in cheating destiny in the manner of his going.

"I went down so far, I didn't care whether I came up again. . . ." he told his rescuers a few minutes later. He missed the closer boat from the *Grosser Kurfuerst,* however, and was hauled in by the *Kroonland.*

Just before dawn the remaining passengers began jumping into the sea. The smoke and flames were blinding, suffocating, even on the stern. There was a new element now, but a welcome one—oil.

PHOTO CREDITS

Pages 14-15, Ewing Galloway, WW; pp. 18-19, European, Monkmeyer, WW, UPI; pp. 22-23, Paris-Match, Latham—Globe, Kammermann—Pix, European; pp. 26-29, Peter Basch; pp. 38-41, WW, UPI. Stag's cover this month was painted by Mort Kunstler.

The *Narragansett,* just as Captain Harwood had promised, had arrived. She was pumping her greasy, iridescent "milk" onto the boiling seas as fast as her machinery would permit.

It helped. There were 11 rescue vessels now on hand, and all were able to launch boats and ring the stricken liner close to. It was a weirdly festive spectacle, like some mad early-morning regatta.

With skies brightening in the east, at one time as many as 35 such lifeboats were counted rowing across the seas which the heavy oily coating was blanketing into a mere steady chop.

Among the last to leave the ship was an opera singer from Moscow. In true heroic style he first sought out Captain Inch and asked permission to abandon ship. The singer then took off his coat and jumped.

Sailors formed human ladders down lines and cargo nets strung over the *Volturno's* sides. Older women and babies were passed from hand to hand into the cluster of boats waiting below.

ABOARD the rescue fleet was a retired newspaperman, Arthur Spurgeon, formerly managing editor of the National Press Agency of Great Britain. He started a wireless to London:

"It was a strange company that filled the last boat to put off from the side of the flame-swept *Volturno*. It carried Captain Inch. It carried the officers. It carried a dog. And it carried a cook who was one of the big heroes of the tragedy, for he stood at his post and baked and made coffee until the flames were so close that his shoes were literally burned off."

Captain Inch was temporarily blinded by the smoke, coughing, burned and on the verge of collapse. One by one, the survivors were brought onto the rescue ships. The *Grosser Kurfuerst* held the greatest number—105.

When the final tally came in after much signaling back and forth over the waters, it was found that 133 lives had been lost out of the 657 persons who had sailed from Rotterdam on October 2nd.

The *Carmania,* finished with her mission, was about to order the engine room "full speed ahead" when the bow watch spotted a swimmer—the last to be fished from the water.

He turned out to be a muscular German who had been stroking through the waves for no one knew how many hours. His rescue lowered the total of lives lost to 132, and there it would stand.

IT was Friday, October 10, 1913, the beginning of Yom Kippur and, incidentally, the day of the fourth game of the World Series.

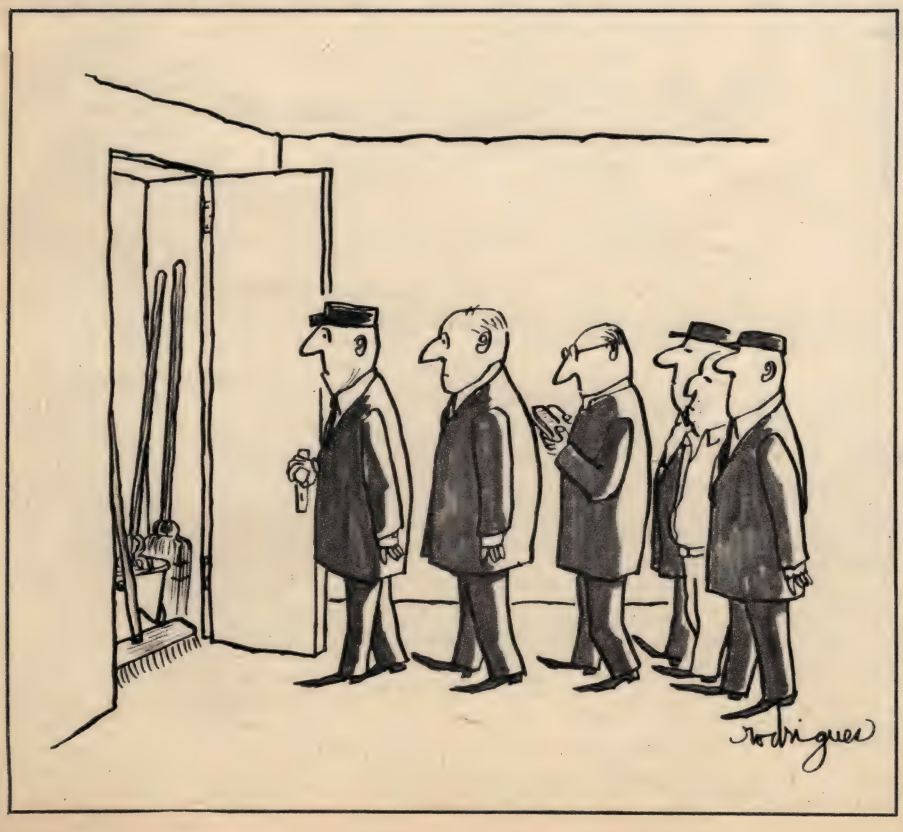
Not until Saturday, because of delays in transmission, did the American press carry headlines reminiscent of the *Titanic*:

Steamer Burns—Mountainous Seas
Sink Lifeboats—Human Cargoes
Fall to Water

As the other ships docked at destinations on either side of the Atlantic, the story was finally pieced together. It made dramatic reading, even though to editorial writers it did not make much sense. Why should such a small ship, with so many passengers aboard, be loaded not only with an inflammable cargo but also apparently without adequate fire-prevention or fire-fighting equipment?

There was one need the *Volturno* had demonstrated by going to her fiery death. The cry, after the *Titanic's* loss, had been for an unsinkable ship. Now, thumped the press, naval architects must design a fireproof ship.

The shipyards obliged, and some 30 years later the liner *Normandie* burned in her dock at New York. Just as the *Titanic* had been labeled "unsinkable," the *Normandie* was, of course, "fireproof." ◆◆◆



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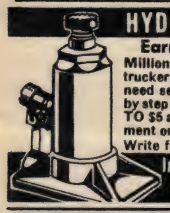

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ON THE JOB

To the Editor:

I would like to have any information you may possess (names, addresses, etc.) concerning the oil company jobs you mentioned in "Stag Confidential" (August issue) in the Indonesian area. I've spent considerable time in that part of the world with the Marines, and would definitely be interested in such a position. Anyway, your help will be much appreciated.

J. W. Josman
Chicago, Illinois

▶ Other readers—including Walter Cox, of Corpus Christi, Texas—have also written us on this subject. The column mentioned two types of overseas jobs which are easy to get if you're qualified. The first would be in Sumatra, where there is a civil war going on. The positions open are for pipefitters, lube mechanics, pipeline welders and security officers. To apply, write to: Bechtel Engineers and Constructors, 150 Sansome St., San Francisco, Calif.

The second type requires at least a working knowledge of Spanish, since the jobs are in Peru, for heavy-duty mechanics. Get in touch with: Utah Construction Company, 100 Bush St., San Francisco, Calif.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

To the Editor:

Just read your story "The Bounty-Hungry Guns of El Paso" (August issue) about that man Martin M'Rose.

I've worked in logging camps, construction jobs and sawmills for 36 years, and I've met quite an assortment of Europeans in my day.

But what puzzles me is that name and the man's idiom, if your writer quoted him more or less accurately.

Polish? I think not. More likely German with an admixture of Bohemian and Hungarian. And the name M'Rose is probably an adaptation of some sort, so Americans could prounounce it.

Interesting story, though, and well written.

M. H. Rose.
Wenatchee, Washington

▶ So far as we know, the story was well researched, and authentic in detail. Most Europeans, including the Poles, have trouble pronouncing the *th* and *w* sounds in our language. Transcribing such speech is very difficult, and we feel that author Chadwick came close enough.

Even if M'Rose came from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy—with its Austrian, German, Czech and Hungarian elements—he still might have spoken Polish: there was an Austrian Poland.

As for the rustler's last name, you've given the answer yourself: he tried to Anglicize what was obviously unpronounceable for Americans.

SURVIVORS WANTED

To the Editor:

I've just read the story "Rig for Battle Surface" in your July issue. I'm pleased to say that one survivor of the S-44 now lives at 1415 Cornelia Ave., Waukegan, Ill. His name is Ernest Duva (Tony). He's also a member of an organization known as Submarine Veterans of World War II.

The Submarine Veterans held a national convention in St. Louis (Aug. 14-17). We're trying to reach all the men who were attached to the submarine service during the war with Japan, and since your magazine is widely read by men of adventure you could help us immensely by writing some sort of follow up on the S-44 and her survivors.

F. M. Stearns
Public Information Officer
Aurora, Illinois

▶ We'll do the best we can. Good luck—and keep your head above water!

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THE LEGEND OF WILD JACK GASCAR

continued from page 22

once a half-ton weapons carrier nosed over the rise where the second MP had just disappeared. "Ask me something hard, like who cracked Murder Inc. Who's Johnny Mize. Who's Jimmy Lunceford."

The MP gave an embarrassed chuckle. "I can't answer that too good myself. You better wait till the OD passes you anyway." Cautiously he turned to face the truck pulling to a stop on his side of the fence, and lowered his carbine at the bark of a voice apparently familiar to him. When he swung the gate open, Gascar stepped inside and stood casually beside the man as the truck rumbled through. "Louie," the MP said to the driver, "don't you forget that cognac again."

The other MP was due back momentarily with an OD who would want to inspect Gascar's papers. This was his last moment and, as the truck was roaring up the road into the forest, Gascar knotted his heavy fist, waiting for the MP to turn. As the man's face came around, Gascar threw all the force of his shoulder muscles into the punch that cracked hard on a jawbone and lifted the burly American a fraction off ground before he fell in a heavy thud on his side.

Jack Gascar scooped up the carbine and flung it high into the nearby trees. He took the embankment in one leap and plunged through the thicket of saplings and out onto a clearing that sloped down toward the heavy vegetation on the bank of the Saône River he remembered so well. He first raced for the cover of spruce trees, but was nowhere near them when the first shot rang out, when the first hoarse cry sounded from the hurt MP pumping shots from his .38 revolver.

Gascar ran a swift zigzag in the half-dark while bullets cracked through the air and hollow reports sounded from the road. He made the spruce in a headlong dive and rolled over. Slowed down by the field pack, he lurched to his feet in a mad dash for the willows along the river. A horde of MPs would be out after him, scouring these woods all the way to Lyons.

Darkness had fallen as he sank down listening to the gurgling waters of the river. His body was covered with a film of greasy sweat. Even after he had rested awhile he could scarcely catch his breath. He snapped off the safety on his rifle and both weapons were ready for men closing in from every direction. *All* men were his enemies now, to be blasted out of his way south and across, somehow, to Corsica.

JACK Gascar was a man driven by raw emotions further inflamed by the heat of combat, and the goal of his overriding passion was a girl named Gia Valpinot whom he had met in Corsica.

Nothing but his extremely tall, athletic

From the landings to the final battle for Chalon-sur-Saone,

figure marked the blond Canadian as being different from other troops in the Allied striking force that had been built up during the summer in Corsica. Ajaccio, the island's capital, was giddy with frantic wartime celebrations. Out of all this promiscuity and carousing came 23-year-old Gia, and Gascar fell in love with her.

She was no wild girl of the streets and she wept when she yielded to him, but the experience released a fiery southern temperament without restraint. They both spoke French—he had learned the language during his boyhood in Quebec—and Gascar promised the lovesick young woman that he would return as soon as possible and take her with him to Canada.

He needed no encouragement with her firm ripe young body against his. And on August 15, when his ship steamed north in convoy, he had made up his mind that he would find his way back to Gia Valpinot. While the men spoke excitedly about the presence of Winston Churchill on one of the ships, Jack Gascar could think solely about his promise to the girl. Her name was on his lips in the barrage at dawn and at the sight of a sky black with paratroopers of three nations, during the terror of the German bombardment on the beach near Hyères. Gia Valpinot was his only reason for survival when his company marched on Grenoble and on to Valence, where the vicious German resistance commenced and continued throughout the Rhône valley.

LYONS fell on September 3, French, American, and British fighting men got together for a drinking bout to celebrate this major victory and to toast the campaign's final successful action which would take place at Dijon. To Jack Gascar, Dijon meant the end of one duty and the beginning of another, and he fought like a madman in the battle for Chalon-sur-Saône, laying down a murderous fire, sweating in fear for the life he must save for Gia Valpinot.

On September 11, Jack Gascar led his squad across the bomb-twisted steel of the Vichy-Dijon railroad line in a rush with other squads toward the wall of artillery fire raised along the edge of Dijon. Seven men followed him into the suburb within seconds after the barrage lifted, and within hours two of them lay dead. Gascar and his corporal, Hank Lopshire, wiped out a cellar machine-gun point with grenades and gunfire while the rest of the squad pinned down supporting German rifles, and tanks rumbled into the city from the east.

The engagement that began at dawn was all but over just past noon when the air suddenly was filled with the shrieks of "Screaming Mimi" rockets from the hills beyond and an 88 mm cannon began tearing up the cobbles with its terrifying sledgehammer shells.

The rockets with their minimal fragmentation were little more than a psychological weapon, but the 88, apparently mounted on a tank since the cannonading kept shifting, forced the British tanks close alongside some sheltering brick structures and cut down their mobility. Jack Gascar volunteered to take his tank out, and his five remaining men elected to go along and, as the big corporal from Devon put it, help him finish off the campaign.

From an ammo truck driven right into a sturdy stone building for shelter, the squad got its bazooka and six rockets, then ran low behind Gascar through the uproar of Mimis and 88s for half a mile of streets before the buildings gave way to open areas. Gascar jumped ahead of his squad tree by tree until machine-gun fire from a hillock stopped them. Lying flat, he saw the trees shudder in a copse and pointed out the location to Lopshire.

"There's our Tiger! Run that bazooka here, Stokes, and then light out for that squat hedgerow there. Hank, you load her for me and take off with them to that hedgerow."

He shouldered the long bazooka for firing and waited until Lopshire had pulled the other four ditch-deep behind the hedge. Then he launched his rocket sizzling for the copse and scrambled off, reaching the hedge in time to see flames lick up out of the trees and hear the blast of the detonation.

"Hank, there she runs," Gascar panted, indicating the Tiger tank that pulled out now from the copse, heading in a rumble to the left. "Take this bazooka on down the hedge while I keep that Tiger coming."

He leaped from cover and sped back to his tree, drawing the Schmeisser and some small-arms fire, and hit the ground in a dive. Through the tall grass he saw the Tiger lumber into a decline and pull around, sweeping its 88 up like a long arm for a high trajectory blast into Dijon. The hedge which shielded Lopshire and his men ran into a scrub thicket far beyond the tank.

Gascar fixed a grenade launcher to his rifle muzzle and fitted the neck of a rifle grenade over it, laying two more down beside him. He watched the tank and, when its 88 recoiled in firing, launched the grenade and lay flat. He fitted another grenade to the launcher, backed it with a blank cartridge in the breech, and crawled off while mortar shells went off seeking him some 20 yards to the rear. Again he sent a grenade at the tank as soon as its 88 went off, and scrambled back to his tree.

When Gascar fired the third grenade, he heard a mighty roar and leaped for the hedgerow where he rolled over and looked through to see the Tiger aflame with men rushing out of the turret. Lopshire had gotten his shot at the tank's backside while Gascar himself had sent ineffectual grenades at its plate front—a diversionary maneuver.

Now the Germans escaping that flaming tomb were being cut down by Lopshire and the men in the scrub thicket. Gascar ran in a crouch to meet them, then threw himself flat as mortar shells began pounding up ahead, dead-centered on the scrub. He heard screams.

Stokes and Whitegren broke out of the scrub and ran toward some buildings jutting out of Dijon's northwest corner. Gascar rose and opened his mouth to yell, but then dropped flat again, saying, "Now . . . now! It's over. It's over now but for mopping up!"

Already he could hear the rumbling approach of tanks in the town, the crackle of small arms locating enemy pockets of resistance. Gascar scrambled on behind the

he fought like a madman, killing mercilessly to preserve the life he was saving for Gia.

low sparse hedge and fell flat as another mortar barrage struck the scrub ahead. When he finally reached the thicket he found them dead—Lopshire, the big Devon farmer; Courtney, the Whitechapel cockney; Finch, the little tobacconist from Birmingham—all three torn and punctured by shell fragments of the last German resistance in that area.

They looked like wax, these men who had been his friends, as if they had never been alive. "It's over now," Gascar panted, gently looping the dog tags over Lopshire's head. "I went all the way," he muttered, "all the way to the end, and it's over now."

The tanks rumbled louder. With Lopshire's dog tags in a pocket Jack Gascar crawled off, turning south and entering a deep draw. Going at a trot, he began muttering: "Gia, I'm on my way now. Nothing more to do here, Gia, I'm on my way now. . . ."

All the way back to Chalon-sur-Saône the rear was a confusion of advancing tank columns and supply trucks on roads screened by the billowing smoke pots of service units, and Gascar walked by unmolested. Even beyond Chalon he was able to join chow lines, both British and American, with no one bothering to question his presence.

The first real trouble had come from those MPs before Lyons, and now Gascar was hiding in the forest darkness, his Webley in hand as a search party passed within yards of him. Several had gone by already, invariably working over close to the river. If and when he moved, it would be west, away from the river, in a bold approach to the last place he would be expected to go—Lyons itself.

IN the weeds he lay studying a motor pool at the city's edge: jeeps, command cars, a single drowsy guard who walked in a slow circle and disregarded the vehicles that came and went; the blacked-out dispatcher's shack, drivers who called out to the dispatcher and left their cars for him to park. Gascar drove off in a command car without alerting a single person as he headed fast for Valence through the Rhône valley.

Late that night he abandoned the car north of the bridge to Valence, but not before he had smashed open the glove compartment and rifled it of map overlays apparently old and unimportant but official-looking enough for his purpose. There was a driver's license, but it was American and, like all other papers, useless to him in his British uniform. There was, however, a quartermaster-general requisition warrant stamped with American, British and French seals, which he kept along with the overlay tissues.

She didn't resist as he picked her up.

Late the following morning, plodding east after a three-hour sleep, he encountered a Free French convoy of light tanks heading north. The men were more interested in his fluent French than in the legitimacy of the liaison mission he affected, and they hinted that the French had retaken Grenoble and areas south all the way to the coast. He used his knowledge of French all that day with cheerful farmers who were happy to feed him, and that night he bathed in the Isère River, washed his clothes, shaved and slept long.

He was naked underneath the blanket when the three Tommies awakened him in the bright sun shining through the trees. They were smiling, but had their rifles at the ready. One of them, a lance corporal, said, "Snap to, Lopshire. You seem a long ways off from your regiment, whatever it is."

Gascar lay still, blinking his eyes. They had read the tags hanging from his neck—apparently men from a routine patrol against possible German paratroop landings. "Long way is right," he grunted. "Got a smoke, chaps? I ran out some kilometers back."

The corporal pulled out a pack of Players and another man lit the cigarette for Gascar, saying, "What sort of trip you on, Tom?"

"Carrying maps to the French at Grenoble. Bringing back some goodies for officers' mess on a quartermaster requisition. Blinking motor sighed out on me back at Valence. Rotten luck."

The three men seated themselves for a smoke, silently watched him get dressed in dry clothes out of his pack. The washed stuff was still damp as he rolled it up. Small talk passed among the men as Gascar got into his gear, put his beret on, lifted his rifle. "You boys going my way?" he said. "Grenoble?"

"No," the corporal said, getting to his feet with the others, "we're bivouacked over the stream. Supposing you come along with us. Might arrange a car for your hop to Grenoble."

It was a polite British way of taking him into custody. Gascar grinned in a bright display of gratitude, took up his rifle and said, "Now that's thoughtful of you, Corporal. I am rather footsore."

The butt of his rifle lashed upward in a cut that buckled one of the men and he smashed the corporal down with a sharp forward thrust. Before the third man could whirl Gascar had him covered with the hostile end of his rifle. "Undress these fellows!" he snapped. "Then undress yourself. Be quick!"

Gascar was clearly desperate. He was going to kill these men who blocked the last leg of his journey to freedom. Once he was with the French it would be comparatively easy, but now he might have to kill Englishmen so the whole business would make sense: the desertion, the clash with Americans. If they caught him, it meant the firing squad and he had no reason to stop short of murder.

The two unconscious men soon lay naked, and the third began stripping off his clothes. "Who are you? What do you—"

"Heil Hitler!"

The man shut up and paled. At Gascar's orders he made a bundle of all their clothes, while the two others were coming awake simultaneously, hands groping at bloody mouths.

"Heil Hitler!" Gascar said again, straddled across the three rifles. "You have France, but the Luftwaffe will make it a shambles. I'm on my way to Switzerland with certain maps that you no doubt looked over while I was asleep. Innocent-looking overlays, but they'll be the destruction of your supply lines. Take that to your graves," he said, raising his rifle.

He saw all three set their jaws to meet death, Englishmen to the last, not a pleading word out of them. He lowered the rifle. "You there! Take a shirt and bind him to that tree with it."

Jack Gascar had not yet reached that point of madness where murder was natural to him. He directed one man to bind the others, inspected the knots and bound the last man himself, all three with their wrists locked around trees. Then he gagged them, and as they watched he waded across the Isère in the direction of the Swiss border.

He walked for a mile or so before he turned south again for Grenoble. There, at the outskirts, he got rid of his rifle and steel helmet and bandoleers, and kept only his Webley. When he entered the city, he spoke nothing but French, and the people welcomed him, fed him, slapped his back affectionately and got him a truck ride all the way to Toulon.

A French launch took Gascar and his useless map overlays across to Ajaccio, past tiers of portable dock structures where only a few weeks earlier General Maitland Wilson's vast invasion armada had been anchored.

VIOLENCE was the last thing on Gascar's mind as, clean-shaven and beaming, he strode into the waterfront bistro run by Gia Valpinot's uncle. Gascar stood condemned as a deserter; he had attacked an American MP and seriously injured two English soldiers; he had stolen, lied, suffered pain and fatigue, gone hungry, all of it seemed justified because of Gia. But when her uncle saw him the old man went pale.

"Jacques, my boy! You are alive—thank God! But Gia . . . she has married Armand Fionzi!"

The afternoon was over when Jack Gascar shuffled along the wharf, drunk with the cognac the old man had fed him as he nervously told him the story. The wedding had taken place nine days before, possibly at the moment Gascar was fleeing the hail of American MP bullets. Fionzi owned a large and prosperous estate north of Ajaccio. Gia was lucky, her uncle had said

For a few days the Corsican papers carried Gascar's name and description, but his temporary

tactlessly, despite the fact that Fionzi was old enough to be her father. Too bad about the war, the stupid old man chatted on, for the Riviera was closed to civilians and the honeymooners had to be content with a month in Spanish Mallorca.

Shock turned to torment as the weeks of waiting passed, but in that period Gascar put his time to use. Free France had taken Corsica over completely but for the British authority that still patrolled the shores. Staying clear of the British, he got the most out of his French among fishermen willing to discuss clandestine trips to Sardinia or even Sicily—for a price equal to the danger. Gascar chartered a boat for late October. He knew the country well from his summer trips with Gia, and made himself a camp deep in the maquis, the dense brush where from time immemorial Corsican bandits had gone into hiding.

THERE Gascar spent the long nights alone with his brooding, and a deep hatred began to corrode his mind, clouded his reason and brutalized his good looks. A great celebration followed the homecoming of the newlyweds. Illustrious guests from Ajaccio attended, and the night was full of rejoicing. But the newspapers afterwards dwelt very little on the affair's social aspects because of the disaster that marked its end.

On the morning after, the family chauffeur found the mansion strangely quiet. The two maids and the housekeeper lay in the kitchen, bound and gagged, as was the butler in the upstairs hall. Armand Fionzi was dead—a deep gash in his skull. In the adjoining bedroom lay Gia Fionzi. She was so completely disfigured as to be scarcely recognizable. Medical evidence concluded that she was first stunned and then raped before she was killed with an ax. A small fortune in cash and jewels had been taken from the wall safe hacked open in her husband's room, and it was assumed that the assassin had entered and left the house by the balcony doors.

In a few days Corsican newspapers carried the assassin's name and description, and British military authorities sent troops from the mainland to help the *gendarmerie* scour the maquis for a man who would desert from a combat regiment and literally shoot his way out just to murder a woman he had known for a few weeks.

But Gascar's name was soon crowded out by war news. The Allies were deep in Germany, cracking holes in the vaunted Siegfried Line at one point after another while the hunt for Gascar continued in the maquis. It was a futile undertaking, for the Canadian had left Corsica shortly after his dreadful butchery was discovered, paying a high price in Fionzi jewels to get him beyond Sardinia and even farther than Sicily, to a volcanic island in the straits betwene Sicily and North Africa.

The little island of Pantelleria was a mass of lava now pock-marked from Allied bombs aimed at Mussolini's submarine bases. Its few police and soldiers were for the most part exiled there as a form of punishment and had no particular incentive to search high and low, even for a murderer, amid the cactus and scattered huts of the island's craters. It was in this isolated place that Jack Gascar worked with the impoverished and close-mouthed inhabitants in their humble vineyards. From their daughters who would occasionally come to his hut he learned enough Italian to get by.

The gentleness and reticence of the peasants were remarkable. He had drunk his wine and baked in the fierce sun for five weeks before anyone even hinted at his reason for coming to Pantelleria. The man who did was suspicious of his daughter's late hours. He came to Gascar's hut one evening and presented him with a gallon jug of wine. Bluntly, as they sat drinking, he said, "I know you are a fugitive. No other sane man would spend an hour here on these craters."

"Don't be too sure I'm sane, then."

"You are a fugitive. I know how you can escape the police, how you can join people whose business it is to avoid police—always."

"There are hardly any police up here." Gascar reached inside the shirt supplied him by the Corsican fisherman who had brought him to the island. He scratched himself awhile, then pulled out his Webley and toyed with it. "I could shoot you dead right now and silence you," he said, a crazy gleam in his eye. "One human life more or less means little to me."

The man blinked. "That would be foolish, for my family know where I am and they would find you and give you away. But I would rather die than see my daughter ruined. I can help you get away from here."

"Ruined? What are you saving her for, man? To dry up in the sun, like all your women up here?" Gascar laughed abruptly. "Your daughter is a child and safe for a few months yet. But tell me who can hide me from the police."

"Smugglers, down here in the cove. I can find them for you. A great business in stolen war goods goes on between Sicily and Africa. The smugglers use Pantelleria as a stopover."

"Why would they help me escape?"

"For money they'll help you. Much money. I've saved up money myself."

"Why would you want to give that money to me, old man?"

"Anything to get you away from here."

Gascar studied the man for a moment, then said, "I'll tell you when I'm ready to go. And don't worry about your daughter."

THAT night, in a brutal embrace, he made a woman of this young girl, whom he had never even kissed before. It was a night without love. Gia's image kept flashing through his mind until it drove him crazy. He struck the girl and soon she was in tears, but when she pleaded with him he let her stay till morning.

Her father, Giglio, came plodding uphill to the hut at noon. "You didn't come to the vineyards today," he said mildly. "I thought you might be ill."

"No. Just drunk on your wine. If you're troubled about your Constanza, I just allowed her to sleep here. It was late. Don't worry."

Giglio departed, his eyes betraying his knowledge and his helplessness. The girl did not come back for days until Gascar found her in the vineyards, her face bruised. He acted as if he had never seen her and walked on and found a young wife to entertain him during those hours of the afternoons he chose not to work. The weeks rolled on.

News of near-disaster in Belgium was announced on the radio at Christmastime, of a major German thrust and Nazi atrocities against prisoners of war. With this news came a pair of Italian police to the island of the seven craters. Giglio was the man who informed Gascar of their arrival. "They search for you, signor, they have your description. So you are Gascar the assassin."

"Why have you come to warn me?"

"Not to warn you. To see you run or die."

Gascar gestured toward a chair and poured wine for them both. They were at their second glass when the noise of voices rose like high wind and, looking through the door, Gascar saw the two policemen leading a parade of curious peasants up the slope. He rose and marched out the door, pulled out his Webley and pumped one shot each into their chests. The roar of the gun blended with the panicked cries of the peasants who broke away in every direction as the two bodies fell and rolled downhill, dragging small rocks and dust along.

Gascar slipped the gun into his belt, joined Giglio at the table and drank up his wine. Then he said, "Take me to your smugglers *now*—or I'll kill your whole family. Come tell your wife to make sandwiches for us, for lunch and supper."

The deserter who had spared the lives of three English soldiers at the Isère River was still a human being. The man who killed Gia was crazed with jealousy. But the man who wiped out two policemen in cold blood was a murderer gone insane, fighting for a life which even he must have known was no longer worth living, driven by revenge for something that could no longer be avenged. And it was this utterly transformed Jack Gascar who was now pushing the peasant Giglio ahead of him, using the man's body as a shield, down to the bombed-out town of Pantelleria, which they entered at dusk.

At a small inn within sight of the cove and the jutting ancient citadel now used as a jail, Giglio spoke to a fat, clean-shaven man who took him to a group of Arabs around a table, while Gascar waited near the door. Soon they motioned to him to come inside, but Gascar refused until Giglio brought one of the Arabs over, introduced him as the skipper and hurried back to the others.

"He tells me you're Gascar the assassin," the fat man said in halting French. "He jokes with me?"

"Don't make the joke with the police or you may visit the Widow Guillotine with me."

The man laughed. "Already she asks to kiss me. You wish to sail with us? It costs much, and your patron has little." Sharp-eyed, in the clothes of a western seaman, he kept a tight scrutiny on Gascar.

"I have money. But I can offer better than money if you take me in with your crew. I have no destination."

"Ah? Good! I know you can kill quickly, and that is often of value in my line. It is true what that man tells of the two police?"

"It's true."

"Then you'll quickly earn back what I take to carry you away."

notoriety was soon crowded out of the headlines by war news.

As the darkness fell, Mohammed, as the skipper called himself, led his men and Gascar to a rocky, shrub-crested point of the cove. From a half-wrecked tunnel that used to harbor submarines, two of the men hauled a skiff laden with American radio equipment. The party put out into the straits where, 20 minutes out, a steamer lay anchored with more men and more cargo—automatic weapons, truck parts, canisters of gasoline. All of it, Mohammed explained with flashing eyes, was for Tunisian insurgents who were getting ready for their war of independence from France.

Where ancient Carthage once stood, the skiff brought Mohammed's small crew and the radio equipment ashore. It was on the sands of Cape Bon, before dawn, and overcome with the sense of his own importance, Gascar felt like Hannibal himself as he set foot on the African continent, where the excitement of plunder, murder and battle would drown out the good things he had dreamed about.

After storing the cargo in a cache among a cluster of palms, the crew sat waiting for a truck that was due to haul them to Tunis. Mohammed said to Gascar, "We now go to the kasbah, which may be bad for Frenchmen. There is much animosity against the French, and the streets are narrow, dark, dangerous. Food is often poisoned for Frenchmen."

"I have no compunctions about killing Frenchmen. I'm a Canadian, so stop baiting me. And don't get on my nerves with your hypocritical display of nationalism. You're in this for profit."

The little Arab let out a burst of laughter to conceal his deep sense of injury, and slapped Gascar hard on the back. "Ho, Gascar, I believe you'd really kill me if I annoyed you enough."

"I wouldn't hesitate to kill a person for less than that."

GASCAR was at once popular in the medieval world that was the kasbah of Tunis. With Mohammed and his handpicked crew—four men almost as burly as the blond Canadian himself — Gascar passed through crowds of veiled women and men in flowing robes, down twisted, reeking alleys ringing with the babble of innumerable tongues. He ate strange sweets and pastries, dates, olives from nearby groves, succulent strings of sausages in the street kitchens and bazaars. He crouched to follow Mohammed through a tunnel into a four-foot alley that led to the dark, intrigue-ridden little Karamed Restaurant. There he ate couscous, the national dish of North Africa—spiced, fatty barley meal stewed with lamb—while young Arabs in western dress and old bearded ones wearing turbans came to look at the notorious assassin of the hated Frenchmen.

They drank heartily of fine red Berradia wine as Mohammed did his business with two clean-shaven young Arabs who kept glancing furtively about as if French spies surrounded them everywhere. Gascar was drunk when Mohammed said it was time to go.

"I'm not ready to leave. I like the kasbah."

"And the kasbah likes you. But we have work to do at Dehibat. A cargo of palm oil to push out into the Gulf of Gabès where the steamer meets us after unloading." His men rose with him, but Gascar continued drinking at his leisure. Smiling, Mohammed sat down. "I want you in my crew, Gascar. I had hoped to spend the night at Sfax, for social reasons. But if you and the kasbah are in love. . . ."

Red-and-yellow-robed Gafsa women and Medenine girls in blue passed amid Negroes, Berbers and Djerba Jews, and Gascar was just another European in their midst, along with red-capped soldiers and sailors in blue berets. The end of the afternoon he spent with Mohammed and the crewmen at the grilled-window house of prostitutes and his insane, howling laughter rang out into the Rue Sidi Abdallah Gueche.

AT dusk they walked in an alley flanked on both sides by Moors and Bedouins who jeered at the blond Canadian until he knocked two heads together and kicked a bearded man in the face. Mohammed had to shriek at them in Arabic to stay the curved knives that sprang forth on all sides. Out of nowhere some French gendarmes appeared with their clubs and wide capes, and in two swift blows Gascar had them both unconscious on the cobbles. While the robed men gaped, he twisted the knife out of the nearest brown hand he could grasp, and cut the Frenchmen's throats.

Hysterical Arabs ran off in every direction, and the smugglers were alone with the dead. "Madman!" Mohammed gasped, but he couldn't suppress a gleeful chuckle as he pushed Gascar into the nearest tunnel. He knew the place would be teeming with police at night. When they got to a room at a dingy lodginghouse Mohammed held his sides with laughter. "A mad assassin, just as the newspapers called you, Gascar! But completely charming! Completely!"

A crewman grunted. "Providing you do your murders among the French exclusively." He made a comical gesture at his own throat and began to speak again when Mohammed grabbed his arm.

"Listen!" Distantly, an alarm clock sounded, then another. The men all sat poised on the floor, listening. Still closer, another clock rang out. At this point all five Arab seamen sprang up at once, and Mohammed pulled Gascar along with them through a back door and low into another tunnel. "Police. Those alarm clocks are the signal that they're coming this way!"

They spent the night at the same house of prostitution, where for hours, until Gascar fell asleep, several women from as many different nations concentrated on keeping him too busy to get as noisy as he had been that afternoon.

At dawn Mohammed roused Gascar and took him with the others to the Karamed Restaurant for breakfast. The proprietor slapped his back and, in French, congratulated him warmly on his fine job on the two gendarmes, presenting him with a bottle of Berradia in the name of all Tunisia. Mohammed said, "Be kind and don't drink it now, Gascar. Wine plays dangerous games in that head of yours."

Gascar finished the wine at breakfast anyway while the bitterness sharpened in the skipper's face and the others kept fidgeting.

The blazing tank's crew fled in panic.

In a back room a change of clothes awaited them: western caps, white shirts and duck pants for Mohammed and one of the men; Arab burnooses for two others, and a turban and a corresponding outfit for the fourth crewman. Gascar was given an American khaki shirt and trousers to match.

Mohammed sent those in burnooses off first, each with a large cardboard carton. He was not grinning as he usually did when he told Gascar, "There are guns in those boxes. Some to deliver at the docks, others for our own use on the road to Dehibat. Automatic weapons."

"I've handled automatic weapons. You have an irritating manner."

"I only mean to warn you that danger may lie ahead."

They left the kasbah in pairs. The morning sun had heated the wine in Gascar's brain when he arrived with one of the crewmen at the truck near the Tunis docks. The other four were already there and the truck was loaded with fish under which, Mohammed boasted, lay quantities of sword blades, mirrors, cloth and beads, all destined for desert towns to the south.

MOHAMMED sat behind the wheel, next to the man dressed like him; the third in the turban was also sitting in front. The two in burnooses asked Gascar to sit with them in the van amid the smelly fish. Grinning, one man lifted his burnoose and showed Gascar a Thompson submachine gun as the truck rumbled down the tree-lined Avenue de France. Gascar yawned and promptly went to sleep.

They lunched at Sfax, and there Gascar discovered that while he slept he had been relieved of his Webley. He said nothing about it as the truck headed for Gabès on a road that ran along the gulf bearing that city's name. One of the men gave his burnoose to Gascar, saying, "The newspapers are full of your name again, Gascar. All over Sfax in the morning editions—French and Arabic both."

As Gascar maintained a cold silence, the man went on: "Through here there's less traffic and we may be stopped. The authorities have traced you through Pantelleria to North Africa. The whole coast is alerted. Keep that burnoose over those khakis and don't say a word if we're stopped."

As the first shadows of dusk showed, the man with the Tommy gun began to nod. Gascar

"There must be a reward for me," Gascar said.

"A sizable one. But Mohammed has high hopes for you. He likes you, Gascar." Mohammed overheard his remark and both men began to chuckle.

The afternoon sun beat down hard as they approached the desert, and they stopped at Gabès only to pick up water and a large can of couscous. Then, after they had passed the city, they were flagged down by uniformed men at a Foreign Legion road station. Wrapped in his burnoose, Gascar steeled himself for instantaneous action as someone told Mohammed to sign a waiver of government responsibility for their lives and property. He heard the Legion noncom advise Mohammed by all means to check in at the Legion way station halfway to Dehibat.

As the truck rolled on, the Tommy-gun man said, "Never fear, Gascar, you're in safe hands. The war has turned the desert back a hundred years and the Tuareg are supplying the slavers again, bringing blacks up from the Sudan and even West Africa. But we are not blacks, eh?" He began to laugh softly.

The other man said, "Keep your finger on the trigger in any case, Abdul. I've heard of sheiks in Saudi Arabia who would pay heavily for a strong white man . . . blond . . . if we turned him into a eunuch."

The men laughed and Gascar shut his eyes, but he did not sleep. Through half-closed lids he watched the others sweat and fidget over the fish crates which stank dreadfully in the desert sun. They would rot, all those fish, long before Dehibat, and they would have to be dumped shortly. So, long before they reached their destination, Gascar struck.

The first signs of twilight showed in the sky when the Tommy-gun man began to nod and his companion fell sound asleep. At this moment Gascar lashed out his fist at the dozing smuggler who had the gun. By the sharp crack of bone it was clear that he'd broken the man's jaw. The noiseless assault never awakened the other man, whom Gascar killed with a crushing wallop from the Thompson he now regarded as his own. He leaned back, waiting, pretending to be asleep. In half an hour the truck veered west on a rocky trail, no doubt to dump the rotting fish and perhaps to avoid the Legion way station up ahead. There would have to be a stop for supper, and Mohammed had the can of couscous in the cab.

A mile along the trail they made a stop. The guttural sounds of Arabic rose as the three smugglers left the cab. They were still babbling, when, before they could discover their companions—one unconscious, the other dead—Gascar opened fire point-blank. The racketing din sent a look of shock into the dying eyes of Mohammed and kept on going until all the smugglers were dead. Then Gascar jumped out into the still desert air filled with the acrid smell of gunpowder and went after the can of couscous. He was ravenously hungry.

A FOREIGN Legion colonel with a fair knowledge of English arrived by helicopter from Kasserine to investigate the incredible affair near Dehibat. Noncoms at the nearby way station, where Gascar had turned himself in, had pieced it vaguely together by means of an English dictionary, since the American soldier (as Gascar now described himself) could express himself in no other language, and his idiom was pretty crude at that. It was fantastic—a uniformed Yank soldier captured by smugglers for sale to Arab slavers! A brewing Tunisian revolt! Two gendarmes knifed to death in Tunis by the head of the gang! Yet everything checked, the contraband goods hidden by rotting fish just as the American had testified, the bodies where he had left them—all Arabs, all armed. The colonel listened with mounting fascination, though he had difficulty understanding Gascar's rapid, slurring speech.

And what a modest man this American was! He who had beaten five thugs by using his fists alone to wrest the machine gun from them (of course he shot them later in self-defense), he who had warned France about an incipient rebellion—this brave soldier now begged the colonel to shield him from newspapermen! "But you're a hero," the colonel protested. "The newspapers can help you to—"

"No! Listen to me, Colonel. I've had my bellyful of the American army. It was all right before the war passed us by. They refused my request for duty in Europe."

For a moment the colonel regarded him incredulously, but then a slow smile crossed his face. "Mon Dieu, I was once your age! But of course, indolence, ennui—you can't bear it! Listen, my boy, the French Foreign Legion—"

"The Legion asks no questions, right? I heard tell of that."

"And action—much action! Hardships—but you're tough, rugged, as you Yanks call it, yes." The colonel raved about the Legion all the way to Kasserine in the helicopter, insisting that Gascar—or Jackson, as he called himself—learn French in a hurry to become eligible for officer's school, and he recited the Legion's glorious history right up to the present war in a eulogy Gascar was to hear over and over for months to come.

He heard it for ten days at Sidi-bel-Abbès, where he got his hobnailed boots, tropical khakis and the red-and-blue kepi. He heard it at Saida through his months of training, the tedious work of stowing his gear in the meticulous manner that made a *paquetage*, through the long sun-scorched marches, the back-breaking work in stone quarries. The most demanding noncoms he had ever met abused their power in a hundred ways that brought Gascar to the verge of breaking each one of them in two, but for the first time since he had drifted away from his dead friends at Dijon, Gascar felt securely beyond the reach of the law.

All along the African coast the hunt for him went on. He read small items about it in the Saida newspaper, but, like other papers all over the world, it had little space to spare because of the news about the war that rolled on to final victory in Europe while he trained to be a Legionnaire. Men of the Legion, officers and noncoms in particular, seemed to live in a world of their own, and no one regarded him with a hint of suspicion—until he met Sergeant Bagnac at the desert post of Géryville.

A week after his contingent arrived Gascar went out with the men under Bagnac's command and saw his first desert combat. Berbers had come a long way down from their Atlas Mountain home in the north to raid caravans trekking from oasis to oasis, and Bagnac, a sullen Belgian as tall and muscular as Gascar, detailed the Canadian, who never spoke a word, to carry the machine gun. He had been watching Gascar all week, and clearly he gave him the heavy gun on a mean impulse to test his endurance. It turned out to be a good opportunity for Gascar to use the gun.

BERBER rifles wounded one of the scouts marching ahead of the Legion column. Mounted on camels, the Berbers came over high dunes in an arc to flank the column. A man had just set the machine-gun tripod down when Gascar ran off behind the men falling flat in firing position, and he dropped to his knees loading a curved magazine amid the crackle of rifle fire. The machine gun in his arms began to hammer out its pattern, and Berbers momentarily hung in the air where the camels had fled from under them, and then the tribesmen hit the sand in their billowing robes. Bagnac roared orders for an advance and Gascar was up, racing with thunder bursting from his weapon and scattering Berbers in wild confusion. Gascar left no Berber alive to surrender in an action that lasted a few short minutes.

"You kill expertly," Bagnac panted in French. "You kill like a man who has both experience and love for assassination."

Gascar had made it plain that he understood no French. Bagnac stood grinning over him, then turned away, regrouped his men and ordered litters made for the five who were wounded.

Thereafter Bagnac always spoke in rapid French with Gascar while continuing to order the others about in the traditional sign language. Gascar stayed deaf to the French language and endured Bagnac's petty criticisms in the barracks and out on desert missions against marauders.

Bagnac had him march for an hour, holding his 80 pounds of gear above his head in the sun and all this for a speck of dust the sergeant found in a cot spring. Bagnac undid his *paquetage* each evening for being, as

Point-blank, he opened fire on them.

smashed his fist at the dozing smuggler's jaw. He heard the bone crack as it shattered.

he put it, faultily made. And always Bagnac spoke to him in involved French sentences that the Canadian ignored with a rigid self-discipline. Gascar waited for his chance.

The red-light district in Géryville was a place by itself, walled off and with its own restaurants, baths and bistros. Gascar went there on the same nights as Bagnac, followed him from a distance, learned about his tastes. Bagnac's favorite, among the girls of every nationality catering to the international trade, was a bespangled, lissome Spanish harlot. Bagnac visited her little room off the lighted avenue one night and found "Jackson the American" there.

He greeted Gascar, as usual, in fluent French, but this time Gascar used the same language, rising from the table across from the perplexed young girl. "You must know me from somewhere, Bagnac," he said, circling around to the door.

"Yes, now I'm sure I do. I was beginning to doubt it, but you're Jack Gascar, as sure as I live and breathe. My memory served me well. Nothing but an old newspaper photo," he said, reaching for his holstered pistol when Gascar streaked forward and hammered his fist in the man's face.

The Belgian's gun crashed against Gascar's temple, but that was the only blow he took. And as he pounded the sergeant's face into a bloody mask with his sledgehammer blows the man's features gradually turned into those of Armand Fionzi, his hated rival now dead. The hallucination terrified him, but he sensed that from now on he would have to go on murdering men because *all* men had become equally guilty, guilty because they had betrayed him with Gia, and so he had to wipe them out, and with them the memory of his first murder. And Gia—he must not think of her, because that was even more terrible. . . .

The Spanish girl's screams brought a mounted Legion guard on the run, and Gascar surrendered.

IT was a commonplace Legionnaire fight over a woman, that's what they said. The court-martial took testimony from the Spanish girl about Bagnac's discovery of "Jackson" in her quarters, the sergeant's quick reach for his pistol. The bruise on Gascar's forehead gave further corroboration to the story. He was sentenced not for murder but for striking a noncommissioned officer.

Colomb-Béchar sat broiling in western Algeria, just short of the desert's edge near Morocco. It was the Legion prison and there Gascar spent his first two weeks of the mandatory 11-month sentence in solitary. Then came grueling work in the quarry each day until sundown. The Senegalese guards were nagging men, whose cruelty would have turned even the most innocent man into a hardened criminal. But early during the third month Gascar was mysteriously returned to Géryville. Awaiting him there, he found the colonel who had taken him to Kasserine by helicopter to join the Legion.

The colonel was outraged that Gascar had ever been sent to Géryville, a camp he called "the post of scoundrels," a breeding place for crime. Abruptly he turned his anger on Gascar and told him that now he deserved Géryville because he'd struck a noncom: "You'll serve here, my man," he shouted, "or finish your sentence at Colomb-Béchar! Have you learned French yet? Have you, eh?"

"Une peu."

"A little! And you can't even say that properly. How do you expect to become an officer?"

The combat missions went on against marauders of the desert caravans and convoys, and over the months during which the rest of the world found peace and lost it again in Asia, Gascar learned about the trade routes dissecting the Sahara, the location of different oasis towns and much about the area of wealth lying south of the sands. But too often he would see the Maknassi drag hapless deserters back to base. They were Arab police employed for just that purpose, stony-faced bearded men in turbans who brought their men in on a long leash tied to their saddles, one deserter trotting in a sweat, another dragged along after failing to keep pace; but dead or not, it made no difference. The Maknassi never turned to look at their captives. Desertion was a dangerous business, so Gascar kept on fighting in the desert, waiting, always waiting to get away.

THE action near Ghardaia brought him closer to freedom. He had to think fast to keep from being killed. A group of Tuareg had encircled a column of French trucks and a rescue party of Legionnaires was sent out. The Danish corporal in command pulled the squad into a square and Gascar, who feared being trapped, made a head-on run against the advancing camels carrying the Arab raiders. Robed men brought rifle fire almost into his face before he met the first camel with his body and made it rear back, kicked the fallen rider's face with a hobnailed boot and swung himself on the animal's back.

Two Tuareg flashed by and clubbed him with their rifles. In a dizzy lurch Gascar ran his beast into the oncoming horde, knocking animals and riders into a tangle that broke the encirclement and exposed the raiders to devastating Legion fire. On his feet Gascar punched, kicked, caught necks in a crushing lock. Sometime during the battle he lost consciousness and awoke in a strange silence, to find that the Danish corporal was kissing him on both cheeks and promising him a commendation, in the simplest French he could manage, so that "Jackson the American" might comprehend.

By nightfall the Legionnaires herded their Tuareg captives through the oasis and into the market square at Ghardaia's base. The soldiers made camp, with four men standing guard before the long mud house that served to pen in the prisoners. As the darkness deepened, voices rose from the square mud houses built up on the hill that was Ghardaia, long cries, angry roars and shrill female wails —the sounds of emotional release from desert heat and desert loneliness. Through this turmoil of sounds the Dane took Gascar along to the small telegraph office to report the capture of the raiders and the three casualties the Legion had suffered.

Waiting outside, Gascar heard a cacophony of passionate moans, of music faintly voluptuous, beckoning. He wandered off through the dark town, and followed the strange noise until he reached a hut aglare with bright light and crowded with men in white burnooses. He pushed his way through, towering over the heads of men, and saw a girl in a wild sinuous dance. It conveyed an unmistakably erotic meaning and was accompanied by the beat of a drum.

EVERY oasis town in the northern Sahara has a gate or a road named after the Ouled Nail, and a hall for the use of that tribe's dancing girls. The barren brown land between the desert and the fertile north is the home of the Ouled Nail, who seem to make a living mostly from the art of their daughters at consoling men weary of the Sahara. Adorned with armlets and bangles of gold, they make their periodic excursions to the trade centers to dance for Moors, Berbers and wandering Bedouins who will buy moments of bliss from these experts in the art of love.

Joining the drum were the reedy sounds of a long pipe played by a native musician. The dancer was clad in pure white from head to foot, except for her glittering bangles, earrings and the red sash below her waist. Eyes fixed in an unwavering gaze, she drifted as if in a trance and her outstretched hands moved to the primitive music beat. But the eyes of all the squatting men were fastened on the red sash which jerked up and down suggestively.

Gascar bought wine and dates from some of the dancers who served as waitresses. The practiced eyes of one girl saw the long look Gascar gave her, and she said to him in French, "Soon it will be my turn. May I dance for you?"

He said nothing, but waited for her performance. He ate dates and drank from his wine bottle, and he was drunk with more than wine when the tall, voluptuous girl came out for her dance. The rapid movements of her red sash brought cheers from the fascinated crowd, hypnotized by the formidable rhythm. She danced past eyes transfixed on the red sash, past rows of spellbound Arabs—until she reached Gascar.

There she stood motionless but for the quiver of the red sash that swept toward Gascar and away from him like a beckoning hand. Slowly she drifted back, the sash moving faster as Gascar rose and walked past murmuring men, while other Ouled Nail girls sent up a shrill, vibrant cry that was part of the exhibition and sent the dancer into even swifter feats.

She pirouetted abruptly and whirled to face Gascar, and then they were in darkness under an arch, and then in the light again, in a dim glow revealing colored pillows that filled half the floor of a room.

A single candle was burning. The girl snuffed out the flame and dropped back, her body stretching languorously. Later there was light again and they drank mint tea served by young Ouled Nail girls while the noise outside told of other dancers, other rooms like this one filling up. Twice again during that night the light was snuffed out, and finally the room remained in darkness until the light of day awakened Gascar.

The Danish corporal was furious. All his pride in Gascar had vanished overnight. He raged at him and called him a deserter, while the men broke camp. Gazing stonily ahead, Gascar pretended not to understand

As they left Ghardaia another column fell in behind them. It was the Ouled Nail, starting

any of the noncom's threats of punishment.

The squad was now heading north toward Laghouat, from where trucks were already on their way to meet the column and take the Legionnaires and their prisoners to the railhead at Djelfa. The Legionnaires mounted Tuareg camels, but Gascar was among the few sent by the Dane to make up the rear prisoner guard on foot.

Around the Ghardaia hill another column fell in behind the Legionnaires. It was the Ouled Nail, some 30 women and a small number of men armed with rifles, apparently making their way to Biskra early in order to find protection with the Legionnaires. That evening, after both groups had camped for supper under the darkening sky, the Ouled Nail column took a sharp westerly path—not toward Biskra at all but clearly for home in the barren wastes.

THE Legionnaires were striking north to cover as much territory as they could in the deepening night chill of the desert. Now that he was certain he would be severely punished, Gascar drifted along and let the others outdistance him, and in the sheltering darkness he turned west. He marched over rock and sifting sand along a path that would lead to the Ouled Nail, and all of a sudden he knew that he was through with the Foreign Legion. The Maknassi would search for him, lash him to a saddle and trot him in all the way, drag him to death if once he fell. But first they would have to find him. Then they would have to subdue him.

On a flat dusty plateau there grows a short scrub. Barbary sheep eat this brownish plant, and in turn the Ouled Nail eat the sheep, and the striped tents of this tribe dot the plateau as far as the eye can see. Here Jack Gascar lived with the dancing girl who had captured his imagination. Her name was Gingueni, but he chose to call her Gia. It might have been his way of reviving the Gia Valpinot he had known during the war in Corisca, but there was no hate in this relationship, for he showed her only kindness and consideration.

Even the old men of the tribe, at first sullen in his presence, came to greet him as Gingueni's husband. Four months passed in this austere wasteland turned into a lazy paradise for Gascar by the girl's devotion and love. In time she might have mended his shattered ego, but then the Legion came, in the person of the selfsame Danish corporal.

The capture was made at dawn. Waking to find the Dane and two Legionnaires standing over him, Gascar screamed at them in a flow of profanity in French and bellowed, "I'm done with the Legion, you fools!"

"Pretty good!" the corporal said. "You'd have made officers' school with such fluent French—if you weren't headed for Colomb-Béchar."

Gingueni threw her arms around Gascar's neck as if to protect him, and the Legionnaires laughed. "Get up, Jackson!"

"Jackson, hell! I'm Jack Gascar!"

The corporal blinked his eyes, turned to the others, and they all laughed again.

He had never raved like this before, but at the sight of Gingueni's tears the Canadian screamed in a breaking voice, "You cry, Gia? You weep for me to return, Gia? So I can see you marry your sheik? To blazes with you!"

He shouted his defiance of the Legion and the world. Marching over the dunes between men with rifles at port, he railed, "I'm Gascar! Jack Gascar the assassin! I killed Germans and I killed Frenchmen, Italians, Arabs! I'll kill this damned Africa, too! You dogs, I'm Jack Gascar! I'll kill you all before I die!"

But the men just laughed and let him rave. Their nerves were shockproof; they were the most rugged types that Géryville could muster for this 100-mile pursuit of a deserter. Gascar raved on and the men laughed on into the night's piercing cold—into a windstorm that struck them all blind.

It rose suddenly and cut like driven hail wherever the skin was bare. "Down! Down!" the corporal bellowed. "Use your *shech,* everybody!"

Gascar wrapped the long muslin sandstorm protection around his face and hid his hands to prevent them from getting skinned raw. He bucked intermittently to keep from being buried in the wild shifting drifts. Realizing that the others were down and hiding in their *sheches,* he crawled with gently groping fingers as the sand ate at his hands, until he touched metal and scrambled off with a rifle. He crept on until his hands could no longer bear the glasslike grains that cut him spitefully. Then he lay flat.

The hours rolled on, and now and again a man would scream or groan in agony. On an impulse Gascar inched toward the groaning sound and ran into a mound of sand. He dug at it with both hands until he found the body and hauled it out. The man started sobbing, and Gascar covered him with his huge body. Hour after hour passed, but finally it seemed that the implacable Sahara would devour the whole group, even though Gascar continued to labor trying to save other men from being buried.

Through the screeching whiplash haze the morning sun glowed red under the visor of Gascar's kepi. The storm continued, yet he felt hardly any bite at all against his hands that lay exposed and crusted with dried blood. He removed the *shech* from his face and saw that he was lying at the bottom of a dry wadi. Alongside him was a man, and beyond there were three more. He grabbed the rifle at his side and leaped to his feet. He prodded the man near him and heard him murmur, "Thanks, Jackson."

These two words turned his mind back to his scrambling and digging some hours before, and he remembered hauling some men into the wadi. "When this lets up," he said in a grating voice, "I'm going my way." And, as if his statement were a signal, the wind quit howling. "You with me, Rakovski?" He pushed the man. "Eh? What about this stinking Legion?"

Through cracked lips the man muttered, "Maknassi . . ."

"We're armed! Let the Maknassi try us armed!" He sprang up as the men he had saved began stirring in the wadi. He ran kicking at mounds of sand until his foot struck the body of a man, and at the side of each he groped in frantic haste, dragged out one rifle after another, uncovered one man after another—until he saw the face of the Dane and crushed it with three blows of his rifle butt.

"We're free! Everybody! Listen to me! Don't fire a rifle till it's cleaned or it'll explode in your face! Whoever follows me goes south into rich Africa! We'll take the trucks from the first caravan we encounter and leave the corpses to be destroyed by the sand."

The men in the wadi rose, shaking the sand off. Gascar went around and counted eleven dead, helped the survivors with their canteens and drank water himself. Immediately he proceeded to clean the bore and breech of the rifle he had taken, and watched the silent men who fumbled cleaning their weapons. "Who is with me?" he bellowed, putting the rifle parts back in place, checking to make sure he was well ahead of the others. "I can lead you. Every one of you hates the Legion and you'll never have a chance like this!"

The man named Rakovski came to sit near him, facing the others. Two more followed suit. Of the nine who were still alive, seven came stowing thongs and oil vials in their rifle heels. Casually, Gascar loaded up and worked his bolt. He watched two dissidents, loyal to the Legion, stand up and start to turn away. His rifle barked out a double volley that left two more dead amid the bodies of those the desert had devoured.

Rakovski, a squat and ugly man who spoke French with a heavy Slavic accent, touched Gascar's arm and said, "Really you *are* Gascar!"

First one man laughed and then another, and soon the eight of them were in hysterics under the blazing desert sun. They breakfasted from the dead men's packs and took their bandoleers. Then they pushed south in high spirits that bordered on mania.

WITHIN six days their madness reached its height and turned their first attack into a massacre. Out of the oasis of Adrar trekked a Bedouin clan of three families, and Gascar's rifles kept blasting until all human life was wiped out. Beside the bodies of women and children the deserters butchered some sheep and feasted; in the morning they rode south on Bedouin camels and swift horses that covered much ground.

A week passed before the next attack. From a distance the deserters saw another oasis, and as they rode closer they noticed a group of shapely Tuareg women splashing around in a clear pool, bathing themselves and washing their clothes, while their men were busy tethering their horses and camels about a hundred yards away. The tribesmen were unaware of the approaching danger when the ex-Legionnaires overwhelmed them. The women were too lovely to be killed, and the bandits rode south with a wife for each and three women to spare.

They now had plenty of camels and horses to carry the Tuareg tents in which the eight men and their eleven women would take shelter for days at a time. The women wept as they went about their chores; yet, in spite of their horror and grief, they were docile in the role that kept them alive.

Dizzy each afternoon from the sun, the eight men caroused as if plied with alcohol, passing the women around among them and making love to them in their crude, brutal

early so they could travel under the Legion's protection.

ways. Whenever an oasis appeared on the horizon, Gascar directed his gang toward it and sent some scouts ahead. When word came back that the oasis was small and uninhabited, he ordered the group of women on the march to bring back water.

One afternoon the women did not return. Gascar drove after them in pursuit, passed the oasis without finding the women and turned south, leaving them to wander off to a fiery, parched death in the sandy wastes. He then abandoned some of the tents, camels and all the horses.

A GOOD many weeks had passed when trucks were seen coming over the horizon on the southern salt desert—half a dozen trucks and a dozen men who at length pulled up at Gascar's command to halt. "Where do you come from?" he asked the men.

"Taoudeni, 40 miles south." They were Belgians, the affable spokesman explained, a long way from their home base in the Congo and carrying trade goods north to Tindouf. "We might as well camp here," he said. "Won't you Legionnaires join us? We have fresh meat."

The meal was excellent, and during the conversation the band learned that it had reached French West Africa. At a signal from Gascar, a hail of bullets cut into the 12 Belgians, who died on the spot. Six trucks stood ready for Gascar's use, trade vehicles with a cargo of valuable musk and gums. Gascar set the remaining camels adrift on the salt flats, desert-bound, and ordered his men into the trucks.

"These Europeans," one man said, "they'll bring us trouble. Let's bury them, Gascar."

"Let the night winds do that," the Canadian grumbled. "We have no time to waste on corpses. All of you can drive, so get behind the wheel and let's get going."

He opened the door to one of the trucks and was about to step inside when the same man said, "Gascar! Damn it, we're near civilization now—the vultures'll bring soldiers! I say bury these men!"

Gascar scratched his scraggly beard and ran his forearm across his sweaty brow. The man was approaching him, big and black-bearded, dragging his rifle along. Gascar leaped, slammed the man down and drove his fist into the face now on the ground. They rolled over as the man heaved his body and a hand clawed at Gascar's throat with steely fingers that cut off all air. Gasping, the Canadian threw his legs high and spun over, caught the man off balance and knifed the heel of his hand at the exposed throat.

All he heard was a broken gurgle, followed by the tense cries of the other men. He raised his fist and brought it down like a sledgehammer into the gaping face, brought it down again and again so the others could hear the crunching of bone, dealing death with a single fist so the others would remember who was in command—Jack Gascar.

"Everybody," he panted as Rakovski stood before him, facing the men with his rifle raised. "Everybody pick a Belgian and change clothes with him, exchange identifications. Get rid of your Legion kepis! Today we end all ties with the Legion."

And that was the day when Gascar's cutthroat band emerged from the wasteland like a scourge cutting through the wind-swept hills and tangled forests and the rich fields of white-horned cattle, leaving natives and Europeans dead in their wake, accumulating new stores of food and weapons, plundering trucks laden with ostrich feathers, gold, ivory, indigo and palm oil.

Gascar bivouacked in the forest outside Zinder and sent two men into that border town of French West Africa for a supply of whisky. The seven men were drunk by morning when they crossed into Nigeria to find Kano, which according to one of his men, was teeming with smugglers who mingled with the Hausa population.

Led by Gascar and a young Italian named Vintano, they entered the ancient town. Vintano, with 12 years of Legion service behind him, had a real store of information about Africa jungle lore. As they passed wailing beggars near the Women's Gate he explained Kano's importance as a center of trade, as the destination of caravans from Khartoum and Marrakech, and hence as a traditional haven for smugglers.

Within an hour they left the din of the open square, where Fulah dyers pounded their wet purple and yellow cloths, were shuffling vendors cried their wares and men in gaudy pantaloons rode on their bicycles, where native women with silver bangles carried baskets on their heads, with grace in their strides.

Finally, after selling all the trucks but one, Gascar's band rolled east out of Nigeria, through the little sultanate of Kousseri in the Cameroons, well-heeled with British pounds, rich in whisky and food, each man studying his stolen Belgian passport.

At Fort Lamy Gascar acted his part well before the authorities of French Equatorial Africa, so well that the native police merely glanced at the passports—the group consisted of an Italian, a Pole, a Swede and a Cuban, among other nationalities—accepted the whole band as Belgians and opened the way for the truck to roll down along the Chari River for a stop at the edge of town. There they watched the lascivious street dancing of native girls. Some 20 girls, garishly dressed, stood by clapping in time with a tom-tom and reed xylophone, while one of them danced in a frenzy, pitching her shoulders back and forth, stomping her feet wildly and rolling her eyes as her hips quivered with undisguised passion. Men and boys leered and threw coins, and Gascar ordered Robles, the Cuban, to drive on.

"We could use those girls," Rakovski yelled from the van, but Gascar ignored him and drank deep from a whisky bottle.

The truck broke down near Fort Archambault. It rattled and coughed and died of a ruined bearing in the motor. Gascar said, "Make packs of food and ammunition. We walk."

"But where?" the Cuban demanded, his head cocked, looking at Gascar as one would at a lunatic.

"To the end of our lives! Where else?" They were within ten degrees of the equator and the heat was deadly despite their tropical whites and their protective helmets. "For myself, I want very much to quit French territory. It chills my neck like the sight of the guillotine."

She swayed to the provocative drumbeat.

They followed him, all but Rakovski regarding him with the Cuban's troubled gaze that clearly implied that Gascar was mad. Gascar himself felt the madness in his sun-baked brain, but the whisky dulled his senses and he plodded on, one hand on the stolen Belgian pistol in his holster.

On a lonely road that skirted a deep forest, an unearthly shriek arose and yellow fangs flashed as a colony of vicious baboons sprang down from the trees in an open attack. The men screamed in pain, ripped and bitten, scratched, clawed, and they lashed out with the service rifles like clubs, smashing the animals' mouths, crushing their skulls. The baboons that were still alive ran off in a wriggle of hairless purple bottoms, and the bleeding men had to enter Fort Archambault for treatment and medication.

THERE, as they started to leave the town, a French policeman stopped them for questioning. He glanced at their passports and handed them back. When the officer asked Rakovski for a look at his rifle, Gascar stepped forward and with his pistol pumped a shot through the man's head.

The afternoon erupted in gunfire, every shot coming from the bandits and every victim a policeman hitting the dusty road, stone dead. Spangled tawny women and black men in turbans and gaudy pajamas crammed the street with cries of terror, and Gascar's men cursed him in a panic as they bolted away. Gascar himself ran, pumping rifle blasts at a bus that halted with a screech, the people spilling out of it.

The street was a bedlam of falling bodies and people in hysterical flight as Rakovski and the Cuban went racing for the bus, boarded it and swung it around with the lanky Robles at the wheel and Gascar hopping aboard. Robles made one short stop to take on the others and roared out of Fort Archambault in a storm of dust.

The men cursed Gascar and they slapped his back with admiration, their confused brains scorched by sun and sudden violence, drunk on their own emotions and as mad as the silent Gascar himself. They stayed that way, laughing, cursing, as the bus ran through a deep jungle basin and out onto a rolling plain, purple in the twilight and girdled by the sweep of jungle visible for miles to the far horizon.

Racked by malaria, Gascar fired his rifle at birds and monkeys, chopped deliriously at

It was a dreamlike vista, and out on the plain, in the middle of a drunken fantasy all seven were sharing, a native column trekked toward them, gleaming onyx-colored people with magnificent physiques and not a loincloth on the 50 of them, not a grass skirt or decorative bangle.

Mutely, the men leaned out of the bus, staring, and finally Vintano the Italian said, "Naked Bananas! I thought it was pure legend, but they exist! Naked Bananas, they're called, body-worshipers. Saints and harlots, every one of them!"

"Forget them!" Rakovski barked. "An army's after us! Make for the Ubangi and over into the Congo! Out of France, out of France, eh, Gascar?"

"He's touched," Gascar laughed. "He thinks we're in Europe. Cross the plain ahead of those Bananas and lose the bus in the jungle. This is the rich Africa I promised you!"

THE innocent Bananas carried bows and arrows, but for hunting exclusively, and greeted the white men with broad grins, sent girls forth to relieve them of their clothes in a ceremony of great solemnity. Their village was built of bamboo and leaves and the brilliant plumage of fowl that was cooking constantly, along with wart-hog flesh, on hot stones set in a pit. The grinning hosts made a ritual of passing the succulent meats to their guests.

None in the tribe spoke French, but the women provided ways of love that might have confounded even the professionals of Paris. No moral restriction plagued the Naked Bananas, and on a generous impulse a mother would hand her infant over to her grinning spouse and take one white man or another into her hut. The customs, deep in that jungle village, kept Gascar at peace for weeks as he enjoyed a range of firm-breasted girls. And the others also helped themselves to these warm-hearted, passionate women.

The idea of harboring fugitives became just one more game for this childlike, pleasure-bound people. Naked hunters frequently came running to Gascar, with an eloquent language of their hands. Fingers made walking motions to indicate the approach of men, hands spun in short circles and tongues clucked furiously to imitate the engine noise of army vehicles. Warnings always came in time to send the white men with their naked guides deeper into the impenetrable jungle.

On returning from one such excursion the white men found a dour look on the faces that had constantly grinned before. Only the men of the tribe were to be seen; all women and children had vanished. The chief, an old but magnificently built man named Kish, pointed a finger at Gascar, then drew it across his throat and shook his head so violently that his cheeks quivered. He pointed east and, with the other hand, spun Gascar by the shoulder to face that way, made a chugging sound and pushed him forward hard. Gascar whirled and was starting for the man when Rakovski and Vintano grabbed him.

Robles came forth. "He knows you're an assassin, Gascar. It would seem the police have traced you here at last and told this man who you are. We can be thankful he has his reasons for keeping quiet."

"We'd better be off," the Swede murmured.

Kish provided cured wart hog for their journey and supplied them with machetes to cut deep in a southerly direction through the jungle. They ate sparingly and hardly touched their water for days on end in their sweltering, stumbling flight broken only by the sudden shrieks of birdlife. Out of green shadows they came into a world alive with sunlight and loping giraffes, zebras, antelopes, and they skirted the jungle edge for a long week, eating the game they bagged. Finally, high up on a slope, they ran into a road, with a Foreign Legion outpost sprawled across it.

And a troop of Maknassi were taking the road above them into the jungle, grim-bearded riders in turbans and burnooses!

Night was falling. The jungle birds set up a clamor. Gascar pulled his men in deep. All had seen the Maknassi set off to patrol the jungle road; all knew that their only way through lay past the cruel Arab police of the Legion; all knew the irony of this moment: the deserters, instead of fleeing the dread Maknassi, must set forth to attack them.

The Arab horsemen took the road in a file, one rider some five yards behind another. In all, Gascar estimated, there were about two dozen. He gave each of his six men a number, with instructions to fire in order, and swiftly, at the Maknassi who came behind the one who would fall. They took up positions a yard apart, and Gascar killed the first man. Then Rakovski's rifle barked, followed by the Swede's, Vintano's and three more as the Maknassi horses whinnied, and before a shot could be returned, the entire band was across the road, plunging deep into the jungle. Where the vegetation bunched densely together they dropped to the ground and sent volleys into the dismounted Maknassi advancing on them. Bursts sounded from the distance. "Cut through!" Gascar bellowed. "Use your machetes!"

His machete flew at tangled vines and he plunged through a few feet before a wall of fern and glossy leaves blocked him. Dripping wet, he hacked away, then spun at the clanking sound of bullets that sought him, dropped to one knee and fired at the white flash of a robe that lurched, the man that wore it screaming in agony.

"Maknassi swine!" he roared, standing tall. "Maknassi buzzards! We're Legionnaires—come to your death!"

HE hacked at the undergrowth and fired his rifle as birds and monkeys jabbered shrilly and Arab bullets pounded the trunks of trees. Somewhere nearby he heard one of his men cough, his throat filled with blood. In the din of gunfire he heard screaming curses in Arabic. He hacked and he fired, advanced into the jungle, reloading, blasting death at four Maknassi before the black of night engulfed him. Now and again he heard someone swinging a machete, saw the flash of gunfire and pumped a shot that way, scrambled off before the return fire thudded nearby.

For an hour he sat stock-still, the sweat turning to ice all over his skin. He began to tremble with chill and soon lost all sense of time, fired at the noise of approaching men and promptly forgot how long ago he had fired. He had caught malaria.

Sweating, he took some food. He drank water in the silent jungle night that rolled in twisting waves through his head. He slept. Green morning light woke him and he lay panting in a sweat now hot, now cold. An opening in the jungle kept receding as he crawled toward it. How many times he used his machete, how long it took, he could never tell, but finally he reached the sunlight on the round crest of a hill.

Crawling, he saw some movement out of the corner of his eye and turned a feverish glance downhill. Far away on the shimmering yellow plain, horsemen in white robes filed by. A man in khaki trotted along, his hands shackled behind a horse. Three more were being dragged on the ground. They were his men at the mercy of Maknassi, and two more were in the jungle, either alive or left to rot.

THE fever swept his mind empty of thought. Vaguely he remembered a river-crossing, leeches the size of his fingers that he plucked from his skin in a fever-scorched frenzy. On a plain somewhere a lioness purred gently at him and ran off—or had he dreamed it? Then he was on a road high in the wilderness, green hills where he thought there had been only dry plains. Night and day revolved around him as he walked, slept, drank from his canteen, nibbled from his pouch.

It was no accident that a girl took up the march beside him. Any white man traveling these Belgian Congo roads might have met the same fortune, for it was Topehke country, and the women of that tribe deem it a high honor to work in a white man's city house, are constantly on the lookout for an opportunity to show their grace and efficiency to these masters of wealth and property. The Topehke practice strict morality in marriage, but it is every unmarried girl's duty to serve the male who cares for her company.

So Ninb'lala, her gleaming ebony skin covered by no more than a tiny loincloth and silver amulets at her neck and ankles, struggled in her meager French to tell Jack Gascar that she would be his housekeeper at Nouvelle Anvers. Gascar touched her breast, firm and naked, wiped the sweat from his face and said no, not Nouvelle Anvers, no, not Stanleyville, when she mentioned that city. He walked on in his fever and she

They stared as a column of completely nude natives trekked out of the bush.

the matted jungle growth, doggedly staggered south toward freedom.

walked with him alone in the wilderness, passing him fruits out of the basket she carried on her head, finding enough French words to say she was a Topehke, fit to run his great house, curse his enemies, warm his nights with her young body.

In the jungle she whispered guttural native words, told him of devils she had just chased from his path, and fed him guavas, palm sweets, breadfruit, bathed his feet. There was a village in the jungle, scarred Topehke faces, eggs he could eat, and medicine the natives swore was quinine. He stopped counting the days and nights, but eventually he began to feel better. The chills gradually disappeared until there was only a great weakness left.

Gascar ate glutinous *qwanga* and another manioc plant food called *ponjo* cooked in palm oil. He had toddy served him and occasional monkey flesh roasted crisp. Topehke people fed him in one village after another since they regarded him as the girl's future employer, and several more young people followed him. So, unhappily, did the malaria, overpowering him in intermittent waves that made him dizzy.

Two young men had appointed themselves his gardener and houseboy; somewhere along the line he also acquired a laundress, and two maids. Ninb'lala, as his future housekeeper, was a sharp-tongued taskmaster lording it over them all. She decided who should cook, who should wash Gascar's clothes in the jungle streams, and which of the girls, herself included, should warm the master at night, thus freeing the others for loving attentions to the gardener and houseboy.

At the great Congo River the young men rapidly made four bark canoes and, by planking them together, fashioned a sturdy barge. The up-river voyage began, and it ended at the place where the Aruwimi branched off and where Gascar, with one hand on the rusted and useless Belgian pistol (somehow his rifle had vanished) sold the lot of his Topehke "household" to Arab slavers on their way up through the Sudan to Ethiopia.

From these men he took as payment a new Beretta, an old but serviceable Enfield, and 10,000 French francs. He also bought some quinine, but even though he kept taking it his brain remained feverish. Somewhere on a southbound trail through the jungle he lost his sense of time again, and amid a cadence of shrieking birdcalls he slipped into a troubled sleep and then went plunging through the darkness of nightmare, screaming.

WHITE men carried him off through the morning sunlight, gently mopping his forehead. They were Belgian police, and he made it to Stanleyville after all.

In his bed at the hospital, in spite of his delirium, he refused to speak anything but English in answer to questions thrown at him about murders in French and British territory to the west. In English he insisted his name was Smith and demanded asylum as a deserter from the Foreign Legion. He was almost comatose when he said this, and he woke to learn he had confessed deserting the British Army as well. Quinine helped him, but he was still suffering from malaria when a plane flew him to Mombasa in Kenya.

Nobody questioned him at the British hospital there. For five months doctors and nurses alike called him Smith, but always hovering nearby were two soldiers armed with Webleys. These men were his escorts on prescribed walks around the grounds during the last month, but they were not the ones who accompanied him to old Fort Jesus on the Indian Ocean. Twelve armed soldiers marched him there in handcuffs—that ancient bastion serving as a penitentiary—and the warden called him Jack Gascar.

Gascar said nothing. Later in his cell he paced like a caged lion. The hospital life had dulled him; his one chance had lain in attacking that pair of soldiers who chaperoned him on his hospital promenades, and now that chance was gone. Now he was entombed at last, as good as hanged.

BUT next day in the yard his luck looked better when he saw the Cuban, Robles. Yes, it was Robles, giving him a quick grin, then starting a casual roundabout approach. Gascar lit a cigarette. In a moment Robles came over and asked for a match, and in French he muttered, "Lucky dog, I thought they got you."

"They have me now. They know I'm Gascar."

"You're still lucky. I like you. Look for me at mess."

He walked on, puffing on his cigarette. That evening Gascar found Robles in the mess hall where the prisoners were allowed by the Indian guards to choose their tables. Robles was sitting beside him. Each time he bent toward his soup he spoke rapidly. "Vintano lives," he said. "He's in Mombasa." He slurped some more soup. "Guns for us." Other men requested that things be passed to them, the salt cellar, bread, pepper. "I've chosen some men here." He glanced up at a passing guard. "There's an arsenal to crack."

"Hurry up," Gascar grunted. "I won't last long."

Through supper they spoke in hurried phrases that somehow managed to inform Gascar remarkably well. Vintano the Italian was in the Old Port, which was on the Arab side of Mombasa harbor. He and Robles had established connections with operators of the great ocean-going Arab dhows. "White Mau Mau they call us," the Cuban said. "Goods from interior. Smuggle to Zanzibar."

In two days an Indian merchant from Mombasa delivering baked goods to the fort would drop four pistols, one of them for Robles. He told Gascar where to find the weapon. He showed him his three men who would use the other guns, indicated them by their positions at the table of 12, even showed him the one whose place Gascar would take now that he was here. Robles left minor details to be worked out later, and next day in the yard explained the location of the arsenal, the times when its guard mount changed and the way he had planned the jailbreak.

And it was in the yard on the second afternoon that Gascar picked up one of the pistols the Indian had left in a drainpipe. That night, just after lights-out, Robles and a Swahili followed a prison guard, terror written all over his face, to Gascar's cell, where obediently and quietly the guard unlocked the door. Next came the cell of a Portuguese, who produced a rope and the guard was locked in, bound and gagged and shoved under the wooden-framed straw cot.

Robles and Gascar went on silent feet down the corridor while the Swahili and the Portuguese took the keys to appointed cells in the tier. Gascar, at a turn in the corridor, caught a guard around the neck and Robles shoved his pistol straight against the man's ribs. The guard was forced to accompany them down a flight of stairs and, on order, called through a barred door to another guard who came up against the prisoners' guns and hastily unlocked the door.

Down another flight the procedure was repeated and gave them four panicked hostages and access to the arsenal. They had no sooner unlocked a rack of rifles than other prisoners, led by the Swahili, began to straggle in, with three more guards marching ahead of the Portuguese and his gun.

In the room, as the men took the rifles handed to them, the atmosphere was charged with tension. Gascar gave up his pistol for a Sten gun, and Robles did the same. The men filing through were of every shade and nationality—light-skinned like Gascar the Canadian, swarthy like Robles the Cuban, pitch-black Swahili, Arabs, a Kikuyu tribesman or two, Egyptians. But all of them screamed in the same pitch of pain and panic when guns from the high yellow wall thundered metal into their flank as they poured out into the yard.

Gascar raked the wall in short bursts from his Sten, streaked across with Robles and whirled to rake the other wall, from which a searchlight had just licked down. His fire shattered glass and returned the night to darkness. A siren sounded and on the prison roof more lights flashed on, blazing the night dead white.

A MACHINE gun chattered in a voice higher and thinner than the crackle of rifle fire and the bellowing of wounded men. Then it went dead as prisoners shoved the screaming guards ahead of them in a race for the outbuildings ranged on one end of the seaward wall. Gascar and Robles hammered shots at guards on the roof while men boosted one another to the outbuilding roofs, from where those whom bullets failed to bring down made it to the battlement landing and looped ropes around the thick stone merlons.

There was a deafening sound mixture of gunfire, siren shrieks and the cries of terrified men, and through it all Gascar shouted his incoherent defiance as he caught a rope and vaulted his way to the battlement. There he laid down more rapid fire, spent his magazine, reloaded one out of his hip pocket, and pounded off his bursts while men fell screaming on all sides.

He yelled for Robles to let up on his fire and pull himself up. The Cuban reached his side with an insane, triumphant laugh and followed him over the crenel and down the rope to the chalk cliff where other ropes dangled down to the sea. In the small cove boats waited, like small insects in the moonlight, and men, with Gascar among them, started heading for them over the rocks.

Limping wounded men were milling around

Gascar quickly scaled the hospital wall.

when gunfire came from the battlement and from the seaward towers of the fort. Gascar leaped behind a rock, with the laughter of Robles ringing in his ears, and turned, firing at the wall, in time to see the Cuban lurch and fall, roll over still laughing, and spring up pumping off shots with one hand.

Robles laughed and bellowed, helping other wounded men down to the boats and turned for another shot toward the streaks of gunfire above, but Gascar shoved him along into a boat. Five boats manned by 31 of the 50 men in the jailbreak reached a dhow some distance out in the frothy white sea. Many of the men were wounded. Robles died on the deck: he had been shot through the lungs.

GASCAR didn't see Vintano until he awoke after dawn. He had spent the two hours till midnight helping the crewmen treat the wounded and had sunk into an exhausted sleep on the deck near the body of Robles. The Cuban had vanished in the night, gone into the sea, Gascar learned, along with seven others that died. Vintano came past and stopped for a look around, gasping at the sight of Gascar.

"You! Robles kicks off and I find you in his place!" He gave a boisterous laugh, but broke it off to sit down against the gunwale with Gascar, and he explained his system of smuggling as if there were no doubt of the Canadian joining him. Then he took him around the dhow to show him the sailors hand-picked for manning the great mast and the triangular sail—huge black Somalis, Senegalese, Punjabi.

"These craft are slick, fast as blazes once out at sea," Vintano said excitedly. "Tonight we cut back, shoot south for Zanzibar. I have a beach all my own there, Gascar, six miles across the cove from Zanzibar City itself. An abandoned mansion. Vines and purple cactus all over. Right now—but excuse me. How'd you get to be in old Fort Jesus? I'm so excited to see you, I didn't—"

"What difference does it make? Go on." He kept glancing over the sides, as if convinced he would see a British gunboat or corvette steaming from the horizon. He had a sense of doom, a feeling that time was running out.

Vintano took him below for breakfast and talked to him as they ate a kind of buttered noodles with biscuits that flaked apart at the touch. He told him about an ivory cargo and Zanzibar cloves all set for shipment to Muscat, about using the freed prisoners as labor for loading the dhow, and about the first-class taskmaster that Gascar would make.

"We had some good times, Gascar. What was it you said that time? When poor old Robles asked you where we were bound. 'To the end of our lives!' Something like that. I liked that. Robles liked you. We spoke about you a lot after those Maknassi got us in the Congo. What is it? What's troubling you, Gascar?"

"Fatigue. I picked up malaria in the Congo."

He rose and Vintano led him to a small stateroom with carved wooden walls that seemed centuries old. After tossing about for a long while, he finally dropped off to sleep. Late that night British soldiers and Zanzibari police ambushed the party on the beach.

They had come ashore in two boats of the great dhow, Vintano with eight men in one, Gascar at the lead of eight in another, up on sand bleached white by the moon, into the scent of cloves and flowers. The town of Zanzibar was a jewel of glittering lights across the water and the rest of the island lay hidden in darkness. The men all followed Vintano up the beach to the whitewashed old mansion with its high balustrade which was about to crumble. When the last of the crates were set down on the beach and Gascar began to direct the loading, the night suddenly was aflame with roaring automatic gunfire from the cactus silhouetted against the far end of the beach.

Gascar's Sten gun had barked back four bursts when metal pounded his body and knocked him back rolling into the water. The racket of gunfire blended into a high screech, and more bullets struck him everywhere, kicking him deeper down where the waves were breaking, springing up around the cold burning pain that followed him into the darkness.

In the Zanzibar hospital Jack Gascar lay in a ward of the doomed, men with cracked skulls and tropical diseases for which no cures existed, tragic wrecks for whom only human kindness was left. He lay still for days as death flirted with him, and then began to murmur things that caused the police to be sent for. With a savage pleasure he described the mutilation of Gia Valpinot-Fionzi, then wept when he pronounced her name. He raved about remote days in towns like Edmonton, Calgary, Black Diamond, and also spoke of Chicago and a place called Butte. He babbled about his army enlistment at Liverpool and his desertion at Dijon, and a police clerk took it all down.

POLICE and doctors, astounded by his enormous strength and vitality even though he was a giant of a man, listened to every detail of Jack Gascar's life while waiting for him to die. News went out to satisfy French and British authorities in Africa that a string of murders in those areas could be considered solved; in Corsica the Sûreté was able to close the case of Gia Fionzi. It took months to communicate with those distant points and when that time had passed Jack Gascar was still alive thanks to constant blood transfusions and his own phenomenal will to live.

"Madagascar and Gascar!" Jack bellowed as he raged through

France asked for his extradition, claiming first right to try him for murder since he had committed his first crime in Corsica, while desertion from the British Army could be construed as a lesser crime. Conceivably the British were glad to disown Gascar, for in short order a plane flew him, in a wheel chair, south to Tananarive in Madagascar, the closest point under French sovereignty.

Two scars had healed on his heavy neck and his arms were out of their casts. His legs were ready to be exercised, but an abdominal binder covered the drains still in his belly and his chest still had to be taped.

A MINIMUM of furor attended Gascar's arrival, because it happened in March, 1947, when the news was full of the Madagascan revolt that had just begun. At the convalescent home where the weakened and pale Canadian was kept pending trial or transfer to France, the rattle of gunfire in the nearby Ankaratra Mountains could be heard, and the native nurse who wheeled Gascar around the lawn in the afternoon apologized to him for the noise. She was of Malay stock like most of the natives of the vast island, and she was given to a humbleness of manner toward white people.

"My people are rash," she murmured. "They make a great disturbance here."

"I wish them well," he said. "They should be free. I know how it feels to long for freedom."

She fell silent, as though blaming herself for causing him to dwell on his melancholy fate. He asked for her name and she told him. When their afternoon was over he wished her people well again, with a grim, conspiratorial glint in his eyes.

Early in April the French called the revolt a joke. But then there was heavy fighting in Moramanga and in the French Assembly Premier Ramadier spoke of rumors that men in high Madagascan places stood behind the insurgents. A note of hysteria crept into the talk about the revolt. Tina, Gascar's afternoon nurse, grew more and more silent about the subject. "You're sad these days," Gascar said one cloudy afternoon. "It hurts me to see you look that way."

On the bench facing his chair Tina gave him a short glance, then lowered her eyes again. "My people are hurting themselves."

"I would gladly fight for your people. I would die for them if that would keep you from looking sad, even for one minute."

She rose and walked around him to push his chair. "You must have been very nice before . . . I mean, the war and . . ."

He laughed. "Before I slaughtered people, you mean. My whole life seems to be public knowledge. I *was* nice once, Tina."

"I'm sure you were."

In mid-April military reinforcements from France began arriving on Madagascan shores. The existence of an organization called the Madagascan Renovation Movement was known to all. Gascar asked Tina to wheel him behind a high hedge and there he rose to his feet. When she gasped he said, "I'm quite strong. I've been malingering for weeks."

"That's not true! Sit down—please, Jacques!"

In exasperation she stepped close to him,

the villages, slaughtering every "French-loving" official he could lay hands on.

grabbed him by the shoulders and tried to make him sit down. But in the next instant she was in his arms, afraid to strike him and hurt him, pleading with him to release her, in a soft, quavering voice. Then she held him tight and began sobbing.

Rapidly he told her how much he had wanted her all these weeks, how he hated to waste his remaining strength on the guillotine instead of using it, sacrificing himself for her people's freedom. He took a chance and accused her of being more involved than she pretended in Madagascar's cause, and she begged him to sit down. Then she wheeled him to a bench and listened to him.

He vanished from the guarded convalescent home late one night, leaving a soldier unconscious on the gravel, his black beret matted with blood. He had clubbed the man with the heavy revolver Tina had brought him, and now she was waiting in the jeep with two men who drove Gascar to the mountains.

Once, in the Tunisian kasbah, alarm clocks had relayed the warning of approaching police, and now in Madagascar, wherever French pursuit columns were on the march, the ancient, traditional Malagasy trumpet sounded in one village after another, warning the guerrillas to flee or melt into the civilian population. On April 20, Jack Gascar stepped out of a jeep in the village of Vohilava and made three stops within a small area, fired a volley of shots and departed with his driver, the girl Tina. All natives, the prefect, the minister and the doctor were dead.

At his headquarters in the valley of Nasivolo, Gascar urged his native followers to imitate his example. "Destroy every Madagascan of position who won't join the fight for his own freedom! Strike hard and inflame the land! Teach the French how to make war!"

In his tent he comforted the weeping Tina and taught her to accept what pleasure she could in a time of war.

THE Madagascan leaders had acquired modern arms for their people's liberation. Gascar put rifle and machine gun to their best use in the valleys and hills where routes were narrow and flanked by forests and where columns were vulnerable to ambush. Advancing his ambush stations down the mountains toward the capital itself, he led a platoon of terror that opened the area to a major rebel attack in May—Madagascans in strength captured Rakotundrabe near the coastal seat of government at Tananarive.

"Madagascar and Gascar—death to the French!" In this way he announced himself in a chilling roar to the fleeing survivors of every ambush. The loyalist press called the rebellion a tool of the vilest assassin, while natives used the name of Gascar to illustrate the treachery of the French, who trumped up charges against heroes.

The hero's name struck horror into all who had no more than a halfhearted devotion to the revolt, and at the rumor of Gascar's presence in any given area French installations became the target for savage acts of sabotage. Isolated outposts disintegrated in a roar of dynamite, fire gutted the warehouses, military columns were raked to death by machine guns fired from countryside houses. And Gascar himself led ambitious hit-and-run raids on French strongpoints.

At the end of June the Second Foreign Legion Battalion out of Oran landed at Tamatave, and with them came the torrents of summer rain. The troops advanced past Tananarive, blowing up houses, whole villages and burning the fields to starve the rebels into submission. But the Malagasy trumpets sounded ahead of the Legion advance and the rebels evaporated before them into the hills.

Gascar and captains of his stripe showed the Legionnaires a hell worse than they had ever known in Africa. In rains that lasted three days at a time and sent steamy mists out of the forests like smokescreens, machine guns barked out of nowhere at sloshing Legion columns who, in the bare valleys and hills, had no houses to burn or blow up. And once the pursuit columns had passed a region, those of Gascar's caliber swept down to punish the towns that still stood despite the Legion's boots, to destroy the prominent citizens as enemies of the Renovation.

FROM time to time Tina wept in the valley cave she shared with Gascar. He would caress her face and tell her this was the way such wars were fought. She said, "The people are caught in between, victims of both sides. We must stop killing Madagascans."

"If we spare a hundred lives," he said with patience, "we shall fail ten thousand. The generals approve my ways. They know war's nature."

"They know only figures, mathematics. Jacques, we must stop killing Madagascans. We're poisoned with all this killing."

"We're poisoned with life itself," he said and drew her close, let her see how submissive she was to the poison that was himself, and soon her sobs stopped.

She rode in his car in the July attack on Tananarive, and left it to run with him and feed the machine gun he fired down from the foothills. She helped him carry it in the running descent amid droves of Madagascans, who roared in a pitch of emotions and screamed with the fear of death. French tanks ran a mobile bombardment that threw the rebels back twice but could not completely stay the onslaught.

In the days of that unceasing attack new French units landed at Tamatave to reinforce the Tananarive battalions, and then the planes came, strafing the rebel columns, bombing their mountain bastions, finally driving them back and back to Mananjary.

Before the regrouping could fully bring about a proper line of resistance, the skies became black with specks that were men in billowing parachutes, thousands of them descending like locusts on Mananjary and its surrounding territory. From his cellar in that town Gascar rallied his platoons. He sent the men forth to arm the civilians, and the best of them were detailed to mine-laying forays in the outskirts.

He took one platoon with mortars and machine gun-mounted jeeps to a crag where he could command a corridor leading to the town, and there he hammered death at the paratroopers, driving them in a direction that would force them to cross his mine fields. The fight was savage and relentless for two days before he drew back into Mananjary and ordered all defiantly passive civilians to be rounded up at once.

The rain drove the mists from the forests down in a haze over the face of the town and through it Gascar, covered with sweat and grime, hurried bellowing his orders and taking them from senior officers who flashed by in command cars and jeeps. It was a major withdrawal before the advancing airborne troops of the French, and Gascar's rear guard was to save it from becoming a rout. Enemy mortar shells, sliding in overhead without a warning whisper, began detonating in patterns that tore at the street and drove him into his headquarters building, where Tina, bulky in her battle jacket and with her small "grease-gun" submachine weapon slung on her shoulder, studied the foothills through a telescope at the window.

"The mines have slowed them," she said. "The shelling works well." To a man with a portable radio she gave co-ordinates to send back to the 37 mm fieldpieces pounding away in the distance.

"How many civilians are brought together?" Gascar asked his lieutenant.

"Some hundred or so."

"March them here."

"Captain, the shelling, the enemy mortars. The street—"

"March them here!"

Tina handed the telescope to the radio man and came to stand before Gascar's heavy chair. "How will the civilians be of use, Jacques?"

"We'll march them forward, men, women and children, for the paratroopers to face. Their bodies will be more effective than mines."

"Their bodies, Jacques? The small children too?"

"The sin will be on the French, not on Madagascans. If it's all that cruel, let the paratroopers fall back. You weep, Tina? You stand there weeping? Weep for the thousands, weep for all the land, for the valiant who die in this fight, and not for these cattle who cringe from war."

"I don't weep for the civilians, Jacques," she said over the droning voice of the radio man, over the hollow clatter of guns. "I weep for you."

THERE was a metallic click and Jack Gascar, soldier, assassin, captain of a hundred terrors in Africa, saw the safety bar raised on Tina's "grease-gun" and saw her tears. First came a single shot, a roar in the little room, and then her weapon began its hollow stuttering that knocked Gascar and his heavy chair over backward. She remembered the power of this man's vitality, his stubborn strength to withstand murderous bullets, and ran in a half-circle to stand over him. And, with tears streaming down her face, she pumped burst after burst into Jack Gascar's body.

He died in a bath of his own blood, but before he did he spoke two agonized words. "Gia!" he croaked, his eyes on the Madagascan nurse. "Slut!" he hissed, his eyes closed as the gun barked and sent him at last to the only destination he had sought—the bloody, inevitable end of his life. ◆◆◆

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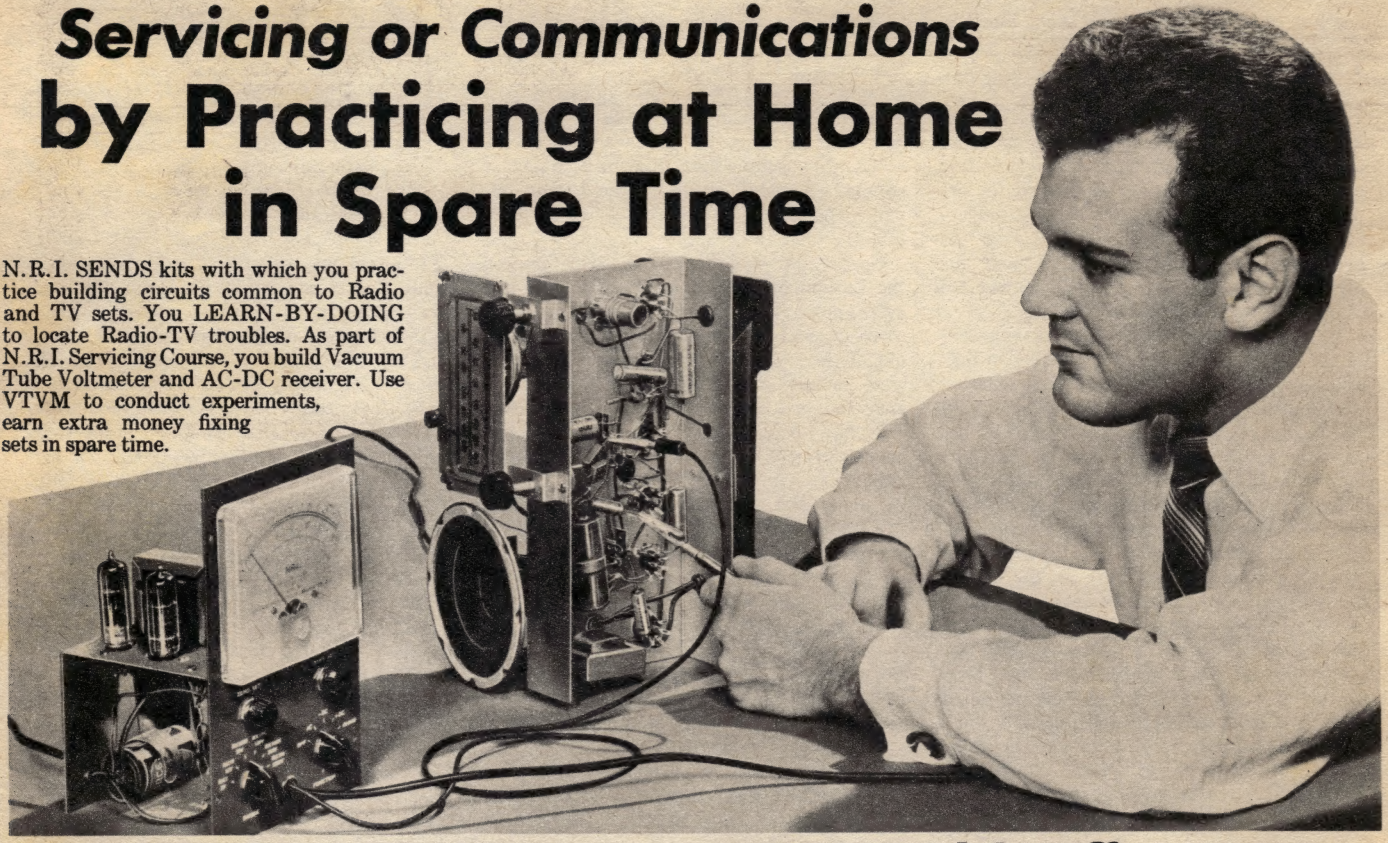

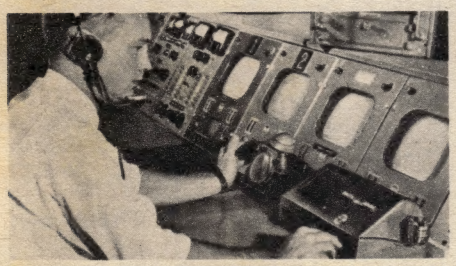

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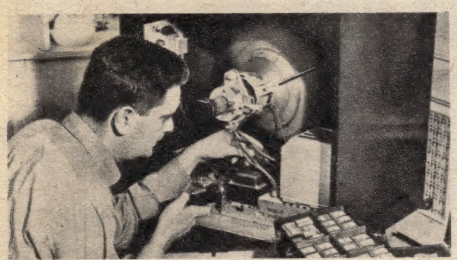

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